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The Players' Shakespeare

Macbeth



Macbeth

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

*Arranged and condensed for little theater production,
with stage directions, notes, and designs for scenery and
costumes*

BY THOMAS P. ROBINSON

in collaboration with

DONALD FAY ROBINSON

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Preface

MACBETH is in some measure an historical play, for it has an historical basis. Macbeth was king of Scotland from 1040 to 1057, or thereabouts. He murdered his cousin Duncan to win the throne; was defeated by Siward, Earl of Northumberland, at Dunsinane in 1054; and was subsequently killed in Aberdeenshire in an uprising led by Macduff, thane of Fife.

But only the skeleton of Shakespeare's play is historical. The living substance of the play is a presentation of human nature. It is but little more than accident that many of the people of the play are people who actually lived in Scotland nine hundred years ago. People like them live today; and though the circumstances of their lives are different, the emotions that drive them and the pitfalls that lie in their paths are still the same. So Macbeth is as good a play today as it was when it was first produced in London in the reign of James the First. And it is for this reason, rather than because it was written by a certain playwright named William Shakespeare, that it has lived and been read and acted for more than three centuries.

It is necessary in a general sort of way to suggest the clothes and appurtenances of a bygone age in a production of *Macbeth*. The daggers, the swords, the witches, the things that happen, the very names of the people, are of the past; and it would be incongruous and a little ridiculous to dress the characters in business suits and give them gas masks to carry in the battle scene. But a general suggestion of antiquity is enough. The emphasis of the production should lie on the human beings, their human feelings, their weaknesses, their nobilities, their altogether human imperfectness, still reaching for something better than they have yet known.

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This edition is based on that edited with notes by W. J. Rolfe, to whom we acknowledge indebtedness for ideas and quotations.

T. P. R.

Contents

PART I

Preface	v
Characters	i
Scenes	2
<i>Macbeth</i>	3
Glossary	101

PART II

Traits of the Characters	105
Scenery— <i>with Drawings and Explanations</i>	110
Painting	114
Lighting	115
Costumes— <i>with Drawings and Explanations</i>	117
Properties	122
Off-stage Noises	123

PART III—General Notes

Organization	125
<i>Director; Designer; Scene Builder; Scene Painter; Light- ing Man; Costumer; Property Man; Stage Manager; Stage Hands; Prompter</i>	
Direction	128
Scenery	128
Scene Painting	129
Lighting	131

Costumes	132
Recommended Books on Scenery and Costumes	133
Language	134

Characters

In the order in which they first speak

THE THREE WITCHES

MACBETH, *Thane of Glamis, a general in the King's army*

BANQUO, *a general in the King's army*

ROSS, *a Scottish nobleman* ANGUS, *a young Scottish lord*

LADY MACBETH, *Macbeth's wife*

SERVANT, *in the service of Macbeth*

DUNCAN, *King of Scotland* FLEANCE, *Banquo's son*

MACDUFF, *Thane of Fife* LENNOX, *a young Scottish lord*

MALCOLM, *Duncan's elder son*

DONALBAIN, *Duncan's younger son*

PORTER, *gatekeeper in Macbeth's castle at Inverness*

TWO MURDERERS, *in Macbeth's hire*

THREE APPARITIONS DOCTOR, *attending Lady Macbeth*

GENTLEWOMAN, *in attendance on Lady Macbeth*

SEYTON, *Macbeth's personal aide*

MENTEITH, *a Scottish nobleman*

CAITHNESS, *a Scottish nobleman*

SIWARD, *Earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces*

EIGHT KINGS, *apparitions, descendants of Banquo*

SCOTTISH SOLDIERS, ENGLISH SOLDIERS

Scenes

PROLOGUE: A heath near Forres

ACT I

SCENE 1: The courtyard of Macbeth's castle at Inverness

SCENE 2: The same

SCENE 3: The same

ACT II

SCENE 1: A hall in the royal palace at Forres

SCENE 2: The same

SCENE 3: A cavern

ACT III

SCENE 1: A hallway somewhere in England

SCENE 2: A room in Macbeth's castle at Dunsinane

SCENE 3: The same

SCENE 4: A field near Birnam Wood

SCENE 5: The courtyard of Macbeth's castle at Dunsinane

PROLOGUE

The scene is a heath near Forres in northern Scotland.

When the curtain rises the stage is empty and dimly lighted. A flash of lightning blazes and dies, and a long roll of thunder follows. The three WITCHES laugh off stage, a harsh, eerie, cackling laugh. Again the lightning flashes and the thunder rolls. The WITCHES come in right front and advance to center stage. Each looks over her shoulder and then lays her finger on her lips. Their voices are cracked.

Right and left, as given below, are from the actor's position as he faces the audience.

I WITCH

When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

2 WITCH

When the hurly-burly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

3 WITCH

That will be ere the set of sun.

I WITCH

Where the place?

2 WITCH

Upon the heath.

3 WITCH

There to meet with Macbeth.

The WITCHES laugh. Lightning and thunder. Each WITCH looks over her shoulder.

I WITCH

(Over her shoulder.) I come, Graymalkin!

2 WITCH

(To others.) Paddock calls.

3 WITCH

(Over her shoulder.) Anon.

The WITCHES join hands in a circle.

ALL

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

The WITCHES circle three times, hands joined. Lightning flashes and thunder rolls. The WITCHES laugh and leave the stage by three different ways, right front, right back, and left back.

The lightning and thunder now increase in intensity. Men shout and growl and scream behind the scenes. Clashing of metal on metal mingles with the human outcries. A band of soldiers crosses backstage from right to left. Gradually the noise dies down. A long roll of thunder tapers off into utter silence.

For a moment the stage is silent. Then the three WITCHES return from the three directions in which they left, meeting center stage.

I WITCH

Where hast thou been, sister?

2 WITCH

(*With immense satisfaction.*) Killing swine.

3 WITCH

Sister, where thou?

1 WITCH

(*Telling her story with great enjoyment and grotesquely exaggerated gestures.*)

A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd. "Give me,"
quoth I.

"Aroint thee, witch!" the rump-fed ronyon cries.

(*Pauses, and then goes on with malicious pleasure.*)
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

She chuckles.

2 WITCH

I'll give thee a wind.

1 WITCH

Thou'rt kind.

3 WITCH

And I another.

1 WITCH

I myself have all the other,
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know

I' the shipman's card.
I'll drain him dry as hay;
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid.
He shall live a man forbid;
Weary se'nnights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine.
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.

(Reaches into her skirt.)

Look what I have.

The others crowd around eagerly.

2 WITCH

Show me, show me.

1 WITCH

Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wrack'd as homeward he did come.

A drum is heard off stage.

3 WITCH

A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come.

The WITCHES come downstage, left, and join hands. They circle nine times as they pronounce the charm.

ALL

The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,

And thrice again, to make up nine.

Peace! the charm's wound up.

The WITCHES cross the stage and stand together, down-stage right. MACBETH and BANQUO come in down left and stop within the magic circle that the WITCHES have made.

MACBETH

(*To BANQUO.*) So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

He sees the WITCHES and stares fascinated.

BANQUO

(*To MACBETH.*) How far is't call'd to Forres?

(Sees MACBETH's abstraction, looks, and sees the WITCHES.)

What are these

So wither'd and so wild in their attire,

That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,

And yet are on't? (*To WITCHES.*) Live you? or are you aught

That man may question?

(The WITCHES lay their fingers to their lips.)

You seem to understand me,

By each at once her choppy finger laying

Upon her skinny lips. You should be women,

And yet your beards forbid me to interpret

That you are so.

MACBETH

(*His voice husky.*) Speak, if you can; what are you?

I WITCH

All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

2 WITCH

All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

3 WITCH

All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

MACBETH *is startled and a little frightened.*

BANQUO

Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair?

(MACBETH *does not answer, but keeps his eyes fixed on the WITCHES.* BANQUO *turns to the WITCHES.*)

I' the name of truth,

Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction,
That he seems rapt withal; to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favours nor your hate.

1 WITCH

Hail!

2 WITCH

Hail!

3 WITCH

Hail!

1 WITCH

Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

2 WITCH

Not so happy, yet much happier.

3 WITCH

Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:
So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

I WITCH

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

The WITCHES start to move off stage, but stop when MACBETH speaks.

MACBETH

(Hoarsely.) Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:
By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? The thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
You owe this strange intelligence? or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting? speak, I charge you.

MACBETH moves out of the magic circle, and the WITCHES move off stage, down right. MACBETH follows to downstage right and stops, gazing off stage after them.

BANQUO

The earth hath bubbles as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd?

MACBETH

(Turns to BANQUO and answers him seriously.)
Into the air; and what seem'd corporal melted
As breath into the wind. *(Sighs.)* Would they had stay'd!

BANQUO

(Crosses to MACBETH.)

Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner?

MACBETH

Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO

You shall be king.

MACBETH

And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

BANQUO

To the selfsame tune and words. *(He turns.)* Who's here?

ROSS *and* ANGUS *come in up left and walk down center.*
ROSS *has a cloak on his arm.*

ROSS

(Ceremoniously.) The king hath happily receiv'd, Macbeth,
The news of thy success. As thick as tale
Came post with post, and every one did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
And pour'd them down before him.

ANGUS

(Stiffly and glibly, like a person speaking a piece.)

We are sent

To give thee from our royal master thanks;
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.

ROSS

And for an earnest of a greater honour,
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor;
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.

MACBETH *starts*. ROSS, *not noticing this, crosses around back of MACBETH and places the cloak on his shoulders.*

BANQUO

What, can the devil speak true?

MACBETH

(Speaking with difficulty.)

The thane of Cawdor lives; why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes?

ANGUS

Who was the thane lives yet,
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combin'd
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labour'd in his country's wrack, I know not;
But treasons capital, confess'd and prov'd,
Have overthrown him.

MACBETH *crosses in front of ROSS to extreme downstage right, fingering the cloak.*

MACBETH

(Dazed, hoarsely, to the audience.)

Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!

The greatest is behind.

(He remembers the others and turns.)

Thanks for your pains.

(To BANQUO.)

Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
 When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
 Promis'd no less to them?

BANQUO

(With a searching look.) That trusted home
 Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
 Besides the thane of Cawdor.

(MACBETH turns away. BANQUO goes on musingly.)

But 'tis strange;

And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
 The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
 Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
 In deepest consequence.

(Looks again at MACBETH, then speaks to the others.)
 Cousins, a word, I pray you.

BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS cross to downstage left and converse in low tones. MACBETH stands facing the audience.

MACBETH

(Exultance in his face.)

Two truths are told,
 As happy prologues to the swelling act
 Of the imperial theme.

(He glances towards the others and is momentarily gracious.)

I thank you, gentlemen.

(He turns again towards the audience. He lifts up the cloak and looks at it, then looks up again, his fingers still holding the cloak.)

This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I amthane of Cawdor.

(He looks again at the cloak.)

If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature?

He falls silent, his fingers still clutching the cloak, his eyes fixed on space.

BANQUO

(To ROSS and ANGUS, with a nod and a smile.)

Look how our partner's rapt.

MACBETH

(To himself.)

If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me,
Without my stir.

BANQUO

(Calls quietly to MACBETH.)

Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

MACBETH *shakes off his mood and crosses to the others.*

MACBETH

Give me your favour; my dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten. Let us toward the king.

MACBETH *turns and leads the way off upstage right.*

The curtain falls

ACT I

SCENE I

The courtyard of MACBETH's castle at Inverness. Both the courtyard gate, right, and the door to the castle, left, are open. As the curtain rises, LADY MACBETH comes from the castle, and stands in front of the door reading a letter.

LADY MACBETH

(*Reading.*) "They met me in the day of success; and I have learned by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me "Thane of Cawdor"; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with "Hail, king that shalt be!" This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

(The letter still in her hand, she drops her arms to her sides, throws her head up, and moves forward. Exultance and determination are in her voice.)

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be
What thou art promis'd.

(She puts the letter in her bosom. After a moment's silence she goes on in a lower voice. She speaks slowly.)

Yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great;
Art not without ambition, but without

The illness should attend it. What thou wouldst highly
That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win. Thou'dst have, great Glamis,
That which cries, "Thus thou must do, if thou have it";
And that which rather thou dost fear to do
Than wishest should be undone.

(A SERVANT comes in through the courtyard gate, right, and stands respectfully in front of LADY MACBETH. For a moment she pays him no attention. Then she looks at him and asks in an abstracted tone.)

What is your tidings?

SERVANT

The king comes here to-night.

For a moment LADY MACBETH is breathless, staring at him. Her hand goes slowly to her throat.

LADY MACBETH

Thou'rt mad to say it.

(In a more normal tone, as if doubting the message.)

Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,
Would have inform'd for preparation.

SERVANT

(Respectfully.) So please you, it is true; our thane is coming.

One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

LADY MACBETH

Give him tending;

He brings great news.

(The SERVANT bows and goes out, upper right. Slowly LADY MACBETH crosses the stage, turns, and looks up at the castle as though she had never seen it before.)

The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements.

(She walks slowly across to downstage left, her eyes fixed on things visible only to herself. She stands still for a moment, looking out across the audience.)

Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose!

(MACBETH comes in the gate, right, and stops. LADY MACBETH hears him and turns. Slowly she draws herself to her full height, as though about to give him a military salute. Her words are not a greeting but a proclamation.)

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
(She crosses quickly to him, puts her two hands on his breast, and looks up at him.)

Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.

MACBETH bends and kisses her quietly on the forehead, then straightens up and looks down at her.

MACBETH

My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.

LADY MACBETH

(Looking him straight in the eye.)

And when goes hence?

MACBETH

To-morrow—*(He pauses briefly, weighing possibilities.)*
as he purposes.

LADY MACBETH *backs a little away from him. With a quick shake of her head she cries out.*

LADY MACBETH

O, never
Shall sun that morrow see!

(She falls silent, watching MACBETH closely. He is not looking at her, but at the castle, hesitation in his face. After a moment LADY MACBETH goes on, her voice very quiet, her eyes fixed unwaveringly on MACBETH.)

Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under't. He that's coming
Must be provided for; and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch.

For a moment LADY MACBETH's exultance is reflected in MACBETH's face, though he does not look at her. Then the exultance dies, giving way again to hesitation. He speaks a little abruptly.

MACBETH

We will speak further.

He starts toward the castle door and pauses. LADY MACBETH follows and stops just behind him.

LADY MACBETH

Only look up clear.

Leave all the rest to me.

MACBETH goes into the castle, left, and LADY MACBETH follows.

The stage is empty for a moment. Then men's voices are heard off stage right. DUNCAN, BANQUO, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, LENNOX, and FLEANCE come in the gate and stand grouped stage right. DUNCAN is furthest forward, with BANQUO at his right hand.

DUNCAN

(Looking about him with quiet pleasure.)

This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

BANQUO

(Pointing up to a place above the castle door.)

This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve
By his lov'd mansionry that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here; no jutting, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle.

(Looks at DUNCAN, explaining.)

Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd
The air is delicate.

LADY MACBETH *comes through the castle door, left.*

DUNCAN

(*Happily.*) See, see, our honour'd hostess!

(LADY MACBETH *comes forward and curtsies to DUNCAN.*)

(*Apologetically, but sure of a welcome.*)

The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love.

LADY MACBETH

(*With elaborate and formal hospitality.*) All our service
In every point twice done and then done double
Were poor and single business, to contend
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house.

DUNCAN *nods his thanks, smiling, then looks towards the castle and around the courtyard.*

DUNCAN

(*To LADY MACBETH.*) Where's the thane of Cawdor?
We cours'd him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor; but he rides well,

(*He smiles benignly at LADY MACBETH.*)

And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us.

(*With old-fashioned courtliness.*)

Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

(LADY MACBETH *curtsies again.*)

DUNCAN

(*Reaching out his hand.*) Give me your hand;

(*LADY MACBETH gives him her left hand and he raises her to her feet.*)

Conduct me to mine host. We love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.

By your leave, hostess.

DUNCAN *draws* LADY MACBETH *towards him with patriarchal grace and links her left hand over his right arm. With DUNCAN and LADY MACBETH in the lead, the party crosses the stage and enters the castle, left.*

The stage is blotted dark

SCENE II

The same as Scene 1. Both the courtyard gate and the door to the castle are closed. As the lights come up, the castle door opens, and MACBETH comes out, closing the door behind him. He comes to a dead stop, staring at nothingness. After a moment he turns his head, looking back over his shoulder at the castle. Then with a quick step he crosses to downstage right and again comes to a dead stop, facing the audience.

MACBETH

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here— (*Pause.*)

We'd jump the life to come.

(He pauses again, staring ahead of him.)

But in these cases

We still have judgment here;

(He holds his two hands palms upward and speaks very quietly.)

this even-handed justice

Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice

To our own lips.

(Again he pauses, his eyes fixed on his hands. Suddenly he drops his hands. He paces across the front of the stage and back to the center.)

He's here in double trust;

First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,

Strong both against the deed; *(Pause.)*

then, as his host,

Who should against his murderer shut the door,

Not bear the knife myself. *(Walks, stops, reflects.)*

Besides, this Duncan

Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been

So clear in his great office, that his virtues

Will plead like angels trumpet-tongu'd against

The deep damnation of his taking-off;

And pity, like a naked new-born babe,

Striding the blast,

Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,

That tears shall drown the wind.

(He walks upstage. Halfway up he stops and again looks at the castle. He sighs and shrugs. Then he speaks with self-mockery.)

I have no spur

To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition.

(The castle door opens and LADY MACBETH looks out.)
(Sharply.) How now! what news?

LADY MACBETH *closes the door behind her and goes to*
MACBETH, *center stage.*

LADY MACBETH

(Worried and a little cross.)
He has almost supp'd; why have you left the chamber?

MACBETH

(Ignoring the question.) Hath he ask'd for me?

LADY MACBETH

(Irritated.) Know you not he has?

MACBETH

(Decisively.) We will proceed no further in this business.

(He comes downstage. LADY MACBETH watches him without moving. MACBETH goes on defensively.)

He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

Her eyes fixed on him, her face set, LADY MACBETH speaks
in a low, lashing voice.

LADY MACBETH

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time

Such I account thy love.

(She snaps her fingers viciously in his face.)

Art thou afraid

To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would"?

MACBETH *gestures her away, turning his back on her.*

MACBETH

(Defensively.) Prithee, peace!

I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH

(With scorn.)

What beast was't then

That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. *(Quieter.)* Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both;
(Scornful.) They have made themselves, and that their fitness
now

Does unmake you. *(Pause.)* I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me.
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

LADY MACBETH *turns on her heel and crosses the stage, left, as though to leave him.* MACBETH *turns.*

MACBETH

(*Convinced, but with one last objection.*) If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH *stops and comes part way back.*

LADY MACBETH

(*Flatly.*)

We fail.

(*With conviction.*) But screw your courage to the sticking-place,

And we'll not fail.

(*She comes all the way back to MACBETH and speaks in a low, intense voice, appealing to his reason.*)

When Duncan is asleep—

Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only. When in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?

MACBETH

(*Admiringly.*) Bring forth men-children only;
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males.

(*He pauses, then asks speculatively.*)

Will it not be receiv'd,
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two

Of his own chamber and us'd their very daggers,
That they have done't?

LADY MACBETH

(*Flaring.*) Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?

MACBETH

(*Shrugs.*) I am settled.

Without looking at her, MACBETH strides past LADY MACBETH and into the castle.

The stage is blotted dark

SCENE III

The same as the preceding scene. The gate and the door to the castle are closed. The stage is nearly dark.

BANQUO, armed, and accompanied by FLEANCE, comes out of the darkness upstage right and stops right center. They speak in subdued voices.

BANQUO

How goes the night, boy?

FLEANCE

The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

BANQUO

And she goes down at twelve.

FLEANCE

I tak't, 'tis later, sir.

BANQUO *unbuckles his sword and hands it to FLEANCE.*

BANQUO

Hold, take my sword. (*He looks up.*) There's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out.

(*He pulls a dagger from his belt and hands it to FLEANCE.*)

Take thee that too.

(*He takes a deep shuddering breath.*)

A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep. (*Devoutly.*) Merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!

(*The castle door opens.*)

(*Sharply to FLEANCE.*) Give me my sword.

BANQUO *takes his sword from FLEANCE and stands ready, facing the castle door.*

Who's there?

MACBETH *comes out, carrying a lighted torch.*

MACBETH

A friend.

BANQUO, *relieved, hands the sword back to FLEANCE.*

BANQUO

What, sir, not yet at rest? (*Pause.*) The king's abed.
He hath been in unusual pleasure.

(*He reaches into his pouch.*)

This diamond he greets your wife withal,

By the name of most kind hostess.

BANQUO *hands it to MACBETH, who accepts it with a brief nod.*

MACBETH

Being unprepar'd,
Our will became the servant to defect,
Which else should free have wrought.

BANQUO

(Brushing the apology aside.) All's well.

(He looks at MACBETH curiously.)

I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have show'd some truth.

MACBETH

(With feigned indifference.) I think not of them.

(He pauses, reconsiders, and adds smoothly.)

Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time. ..

BANQUO *stares at MACBETH a moment.*

BANQUO

(With an ironical bow.) At your kind'st leisure.

MACBETH

(Watching BANQUO.)

If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,
It shall make honour for you.

BANQUO

(After a pause.) So I lose none

In seeking to augment it.

MACBETH *turns abruptly upstage.*

MACBETH

(*Curtly.*) Good repose the while!

BANQUO *looks after him a moment.*

BANQUO

Thanks, sir; the like to you!

BANQUO *gestures to FLEANCE to follow, and they go out through the castle door, left. A SERVANT comes from the castle and goes forward to right center. MACBETH comes downstage to him.*

MACBETH

(*With sharp command.*) Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,

She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

(*The SERVANT bows and goes out through the castle door, closing it behind him. MACBETH puts the torch in a bracket beside the courtyard gate. For a moment he stands still. Suddenly he seems to see something in the air before him. He speaks in a low, tense voice.*)

Is this a dagger which I see before me,

The handle toward my hand?—Come, let me clutch thee.

(*He reaches into the air, draws back his empty hand, looks at it, then looks up again into the air before him.*)

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible

To feeling as to sight? or art thou but

A dagger of the mind, a false creation,

Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?

(His eyes move slowly toward the door, left.)

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going,
And such an instrument I was to use.—

Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest;

(Suddenly his jaw tightens. He presses his hand to his eyes and looks again. His voice is deadlly calm.)

I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before.

(He turns abruptly and moves a step or two to the right.)

There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes.

(He faces the audience and looks around.)

Now o'er the one half world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts.

(A bell sounds. MACBETH starts, looking toward the castle. Slowly he gathers himself together.)

I go, and it is done.

With slow, firm steps MACBETH enters the castle.

For a moment the stage is empty. Then LADY MACBETH comes from the castle and walks to right center.

LADY MACBETH

(Holding her head high like a queen.)

That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.

(She listens.)

Hark! Peace!

(She nods.) It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night.

(She looks up at the castle, listening, then whispers.)

He is about it.

(Her voice rises a little.)

The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores; I have drugg'd their
possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

MACBETH

(Calls off stage.)

Who's there? what, ho!

LADY MACBETH *stiffens.*

LADY MACBETH

Alack, I am afraid they have awak'd,
And 'tis not done. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us.

(She takes several steps to the left and stops, listening.)

Hark! I laid their daggers ready;

He could not miss 'em.

(Shuddering slightly, but with horrible calm.)

Had he not resembled

My father as he slept, I had done't.

(MACBETH comes from the castle, carrying a bloody dagger in each hand. LADY MACBETH takes a few quick, anxious steps towards him. He passes her, and comes to a stop right center. LADY MACBETH turns and follows him.)

(Anxiously.)

My husband!

MACBETH

(*Dully.*) I have done the deed.

(LADY MACBETH *gives a low cry, her hand to her throat.*
MACBETH *looks up at the castle, listening fearfully.*)

Didst thou not hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH

(*Now completely in control of herself.*)

I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did you not speak?

MACBETH

When?

LADY MACBETH

Now.

MACBETH

As I descended?

LADY MACBETH

Ay.

MACBETH

(*Listening again, and gesturing to LADY MACBETH to be quiet.*) Hark!

Who lies i' the second chamber?

LADY MACBETH

Donalbain.

MACBETH

(*Looks at his blood-smeared hands.*) This is a sorry sight.

LADY MACBETH

(As to a stupid child.)

A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH

(Bewildered and plaintive.) There's one did laugh in's
sleep, and one cried "Murther!"

That they did wake each other. I stood and heard them;
But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH

(Nods.) There are two lodg'd together.

MACBETH

One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen" the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands,
Listening their fear.—*(After pause.)* I could not say "Amen"
When they did say "God bless us!"

LADY MACBETH

(Gently.) Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH

(Plaintively.) But wherefore could I not pronounce
"Amen"?

I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH

(Touching his arm, quietly.) These deeds must not be
thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH

(Not noticing her any more.)

Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep"—the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast—

LADY MACBETH

(A little frightened.) What do you mean?

MACBETH

(Ignoring her.) Still it cried. "Sleep no more!" to all the
house:
"Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more."

LADY MACBETH

(Regaining her self-control.) Who was it that thus cried?
(Gently deprecating.) Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things.

(Businesslike, trying to attract MACBETH's attention.)

Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
(Notices daggers, irritated.) Why did you bring these daggers
from the place?
They must lie there; go carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

MACBETH

(Looks at her, suddenly stubborn.) I'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH

(Scornfully.) Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers.

(She reaches for the daggers and MACBETH hands them to her obediently.)

The sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil.

(She looks at the bloody daggers with displeasure, holding them away from her, then adds grimly.)

If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;
For it must seem their guilt.

LADY MACBETH *walks grimly into the castle, holding the daggers out before her.*

The light now begins to come up.

MACBETH *stands gazing dully at his hands. Suddenly there is a knocking off right. MACBETH starts violently.*

MACBETH

Whence is that knocking?

(He looks around and sees nothing.)

How is't with me, when every noise appals me?

(He looks again at his hands.)

What hands are here? Ha! they pluck out mine eyes.

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

LADY MACBETH *has come back and heard part of this speech, standing in front of the castle door. She now comes across to MACBETH, showing her own hands.*

LADY MACBETH

(*Scornfully.*) My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white.

(*Knocking again, off right.*) I hear a knocking.

(*Businesslike again.*) Retire we to our chamber.

A little water clears us of this deed:

How easy is it, then!

(MACBETH *stands in a daze. Knocking again.*)

Hark! more knocking. (*Anxiously.*)

Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us

And show us to be watchers. (*Irritated.*) Be not lost

So poorly in your thoughts.

MACBETH *drags himself out of his abstraction with a sigh.*

MACBETH

To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.

(MACBETH and LADY MACBETH *start towards the castle door. Again the knocking, off right. MACBETH turns back.*)

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

MACBETH *follows LADY MACBETH off stage, left.*

The knocking comes again. The PORTER enters and staggers downstage from up right. He is drunk. He hiccups and flourishes a large red handkerchief. He lurches down

center stage, then unintentionally to the left, tripping over his feet till he is almost at the castle door. The knocking sounds again off right. The PORTER looks over and begins to speak. He has some difficulty with his tongue and occasionally he stammers his words.

PORTER

Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key. (*He staggers across the stage to the gate. The knocking sounds again.*) Knock, knock, knock! (*He shades his eyes with his hand, pretending to look out, but in the process covers his face with his handkerchief. He transfers his handkerchief with great fuss to his left hand, shades his eyes again, craning his neck about.*) Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? (*He pauses, then begins to laugh.*) Here's a farmer, that hanged himself on th' expectation of plenty. (*He follows the imaginary farmer across the stage, offering him his handkerchief.*) Come in time; have napkins enow about you, here you'll sweat for't. (*He stops, wiping his forehead. The knocking sounds again. The PORTER looks over his shoulder, throws himself off balance, and staggers to his feet again.*) Knock, knock! (*He lurches back across the stage.*) Who's there, in th' other devil's name? (*Laughs.*) Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven. O, come in, equivocator. (*He bows elaborately and then ushers the equivocator across the stage. The knocking comes again. The PORTER pivots slowly and cautiously.*) Knock, knock; never at quiet! (*Shades his eyes, standing left center.*) What are you? (*He is seized with a sudden chill*

and shivers violently.) But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further; I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. (*The knocking sounds again. The PORTER, soberer now, crosses to the gate.*) Anon, anon! (*After a struggle he gets the gate open, then stands aside, his hand out, an obsequious whine in his voice.*) I pray you, remember the porter.

MACDUFF and LENNOX come in. *They look at the PORTER curiously and then laugh. MACDUFF draws a coin from his pouch and hands it to him. The PORTER bows three times and backs up near the gate, where he stays through the remainder of the scene, watching procedures and occasionally wiping his neck and face with his handkerchief. The lights are now full up.*

MACDUFF

Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

PORTER

(*Obsequiously apologetic.*) Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.

MACDUFF

Is thy master stirring?

(*MACBETH, clad in a nightgown, appears at the castle door. MACDUFF sees him and comes forward.*)
Our knocking has awak'd him; here he comes.

LENNOX

Good morrow, noble sir.

MACBETH

(*Urbane.*) Good morrow, both.

MACDUFF

Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH

(*Entirely unperturbed.*) Not yet.

MACDUFF

He did command me to call timely on him;
I have almost slipp'd the hour.

MACBETH

(*Hospitably.*) I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF

I know this is a joyful trouble to you,
But yet 'tis one.

MACBETH

(*Unctuously.*) The labour we delight in physics pain.
(*He leads the way to the castle door and points inside.*)
This is the door.

MACDUFF

I'll make so bold to call,
For 'tis my limited service.

MACDUFF goes into the castle. MACBETH comes back to center stage where LENNOX is standing.

LENNOX

(*Making conversation.*) Goes the king hence to-day?

MACBETH

(*Politely.*) He does; he did appoint so.

LENNOX

(*Trying another subject.*) The night has been unruly.
Where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air; some say the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

MACBETH

(*Agreeing politely but without interest.*) 'Twas a rough
night.

LENNOX

My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

MACDUFF *reappears in the castle door, horror on his face
and in his voice. He is profoundly shaken.*

MACDUFF

O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!

MACBETH and LENNOX *turn towards him quickly, going
up to him and speaking together.*

MACBETH

What's the matter?

LENNOX

What's the matter?

MACDUFF

(*Still dazed, his voice low and hoarse.*)

Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.

Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building!

MACBETH

(Acting uncomprehension and astonishment.)

What is't you say? the life?

LENNOX

(Genuinely horrified.) Mean you his majesty?

MACDUFF

(Points into the castle, but looks with dazed eyes at MACBETH and LENNOX. Hoarsely.)

Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon. Do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.

(MACBETH and LENNOX go out. MACDUFF comes to center stage and stands looking up at the castle, shouting hoarsely.)

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum-bell.—Murder and treason!—
Banquo and Donalbain!—Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself!—Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror. Ring the bell.

A bell begins to toll off stage. LADY MACBETH, dressed as though she was just out of bed, her feet bare, comes to the castle door.

LADY MACBETH

What's the business,

That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house?

(MACDUFF *stares at her in silence.*)

Speak, speak!

MACDUFF

(*Hoarsely, pityingly.*) O gentle lady,
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak;
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell.

(LADY MACBETH *steps outside the door, supporting herself against the jamb. BANQUO, clad only in a nightgown and barefoot, comes out of the castle.*)

O Banquo, Banquo!

Our royal master's murder'd!

LADY MACBETH *screams, but neither man pays her more than the slightest attention. BANQUO joins MACDUFF, center stage.*

LADY MACBETH

Woe, alas! (*With feigned dismay.*)

What, in our house?

BANQUO

(*Briefly, over his shoulder.*) Too cruel any where.
(*To MACDUFF, believing him.*) Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

MACBETH *comes back, in simulated consternation. ROSS, in a nightgown, and LENNOX, both very much subdued, follow him. MACBETH walks to right center, followed by ROSS and LENNOX. MACDUFF and BANQUO back away to the right, watch-*

ing MACBETH. MACDUFF *is still shaken. But* BANQUO *is watching* MACBETH *with stiff lips and unwavering, expressionless eyes.*

MACBETH

Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had liv'd a blessed time; for from this instant
There's nothing serious in mortality.

LADY MACBETH *is watching him, fascinated.*

MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN, *fully dressed, appear at the castle door.*

DONALBAIN

What is amiss?

MACBETH

(Feigning grief.)

You are, and do not know't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd,—the very source of it is stopp'd.

MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN *look at each other and back at* MACBETH, *befuddled by his words.*

MACDUFF

(Explaining quietly and kindly.)

Your royal father's murder'd.

MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN *grasp each other by the hand.*

MALCOLM

(Shocked.)

O, by whom?

LENNOX

Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't.
Their hands and faces were all badg'd with blood;

So were their daggers, which unwip'd we found
Upon their pillows:
They star'd, and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.

MACBETH

(*A little smugly.*) O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.

LADY MACBETH *gasps and carries her hand to her throat.*

MACDUFF

(*Beginning to be a trifle suspicious.*) Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH *looks about at the circle of faces and commences to justify himself.* LADY MACBETH *watches him, but no one notices her.*

MACBETH

Who can be wise, amaz'd, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man;
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood;
There, the murtherers,
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore. Who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make's love known?

LADY MACBETH

Help me hence, ho!

LADY MACBETH *collapses in a dead faint. Everyone looks and moves towards her, except MALCOLM and DONALBAIN, who*

circle out around the others to downstage right, where they stand together watching.

MACDUFF

(With genuine concern.) Look to the lady.

MALCOLM

(To DONALBAIN.) Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?

DONALBAIN

(To MALCOLM.) What should be spoken here, where our
fate,
Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?
Let's away;
Our tears are not yet brew'd.

BANQUO

(A little curtly to LENNOX.) Look to the lady.

(LENNOX carries LADY MACBETH into the castle.)

(Standing with his back to the door, left.)

And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further.

MACBETH

(Speaking from center stage.)

Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
And meet i' the hall together.

ALL

Well contented.

BANQUO *gives MACBETH a strange look, then turns and goes into the castle.* MACDUFF, ROSS, and MACBETH *follow.*

MALCOLM

What will you do? Let's not consort with them;
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

DONALBAIN

To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles.

MALCOLM

This murtherous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse.

With one brief, almost furtive look towards the castle, MALCOLM and DONALBAIN go out through the courtyard gate, right. The PORTER looks around, sees nobody, shakes his head and wipes his nose on his handkerchief. With a shuffling step he comes forward and puts out the torch. Then he pushes the gate shut.

The curtain falls

ACT II

SCENE I

A hall in the royal palace at Forres. There are entrances right and left. As the curtain rises, BANQUO is discovered pacing back and forth, left front. He pauses in his pacing, looks towards the door stage right, and speaks quietly.

BANQUO

Thou hast it now,—king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,—
As the weird women promis'd—
(*His voice falls to a lower note.*) and I fear
Thou play'dst most foully for't.

(*He turns towards the audience and goes on in a conversational tone.*)

Yet it was said

It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—
May they not be my oracles as well
And set me up in hope?—But hush! no more.

MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, ANGUS, and LENNOX come in, right, and stand grouped, right center.

MACBETH

Here's our chief guest.

LADY MACBETH

If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,

And all-thing unbecoming.

She smiles at BANQUO.

MACBETH

(Crossing to BANQUO, a little pompously.)

To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

BANQUO

(Bows.) Let your highness
Command upon me.

MACBETH *gives BANQUO a sharp look, then away.*

MACBETH

(Casually.) Ride you this afternoon?

BANQUO

Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH

We should have else desir'd your good advice,
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.

(He gives BANQUO another quick look, then asks.)
Is't far you ride?

BANQUO

As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper.

MACBETH

Fail not our feast.

BANQUO

My lord, I will not.

MACBETH

(Pompously.) We hear our bloody cousins are bestow'd
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention; but of that to-morrow.
Hie you to horse; adieu,
Till you return at night.

*(BANQUO crosses to center. MACBETH avoids his eyes till
BANQUO is past him, then asks with elaborate casualness.)*

Goes Fleance with you?

BANQUO stops, turns, and looks at MACBETH, puzzled.

BANQUO

Ay, my good lord; *(Pause.)* Our time does call upon's.

MACBETH dismisses him with a gesture.

MACBETH

(Unctuously.) I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell.

(BANQUO goes out right.)

(In a more natural tone.) Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night. To make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone; while then, God be with you!

*(ROSS, ANGUS, and LENNOX bow and go out right. LADY
MACBETH looks at MACBETH anxiously, but MACBETH avoids
her gaze. She follows the others. As soon as she has gone
a SERVANT comes in, right.)*

(*Commandingly.*) Sirrah, a word with you.

(*The SERVANT closes the door and comes forward.*)

(*Eager and anxious.*)

Attend those men

Our pleasure?

SERVANT

(*Bows.*) They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

MACBETH

(*Nods with satisfaction.*) Bring them before us.

(*The SERVANT goes out right, closing the door. MACBETH paces back and forth a minute, then the SERVANT re-enters, followed by the two MURDERERS.*)

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

(*With a bow, the SERVANT goes out right, closing the door.*

MACBETH crosses to the MURDERERS.)

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

Both men bow.

I MURDERER

It was, so please your highness.

MACBETH *pauses a moment.*

MACBETH

Well then, now

Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know

That it was he in the times past which held you

So under fortune, which you thought had been

Our innocent self. This I made good to you

In our last conference.

MACBETH *watches for the effect of his words.*

I MURDERER

You made it known to us.

MACBETH

(Satisfied with the effect.)

I did so, and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature
That you can let this go? Are you so gossell'd
To pray for this good man and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave
And beggar'd yours for ever?

I MURDERER

(Sturdily.)

We are men, my liege.

MACBETH

(Watching them.) Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men,
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are clept
All by the name of dogs. The valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter; and so of men.
(Craftily.) Now if you have a station in the file,
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say't,
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

2 MURDERER

(*Surlily.*) I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incens'd that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

1 MURDERER

(*Nods agreement, bluntly.*) And I another
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it or be rid on't.

There is a slight pause.

MACBETH

(*Almost a question.*) Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.

MURDERERS

True, my lord.

MACBETH

So is he mine.

And though I could
With barefac'd power sweep him from my sight
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Who I myself struck down: (*Pause.*) and thence it is,
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.

2 MURDERER

(*Surlily.*) We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.

I MURDERER

Though our lives—

MACBETH

(*Interrupting.*) Your spirits shine through you. (*Business-like.*) Within this hour at most
I will advise you where to plant yourselves;
For't must be done to-night,
And something from the palace. And with him—
To leave no rubs nor botches in the work—
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart;
I'll come to you anon.

MURDERERS

We are resolv'd, my lord.

MACBETH

I'll call upon you straight; abide within.—

(*The MURDERERS go out, right, leaving the door open.*
MACBETH *watches them go with satisfaction.*)
It is concluded.

MACBETH *crosses down left and stands engrossed in thought.* LADY MACBETH *comes in right, sees MACBETH, and stops. She watches him for a moment anxiously, then sighs.*

LADY MACBETH

(*Bitterly.*) Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content.

(*With another sigh she brushes the hair back wearily from her forehead. Then she crosses to MACBETH and speaks to him with a forced cheerfulness. MACBETH ignores her.*)

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? (*Persuasively.*) Things without
all remedy
Should be without regard; what's done is done.

MACBETH *looks at her and away again.*

MACBETH

(*Harshly.*) We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it;
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.

(*With sudden violence.*) But let the frame of things disjoint,
both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly; (*More quietly.*) better be with the
dead,

Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. (*Almost lyrical.*) Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.
Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further.

LADY MACBETH

(Touching his arm anxiously.) Come on.
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;
(Pleads.) Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.
MACBETH *turns to her and smiles fleetingly.*

MACBETH

(A brief note of affection in his voice.)
So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you.
(With a cry of pain.)
O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

LADY MACBETH

(Reasonably.) But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

MACBETH

(Meaningfully.) There's comfort yet; they are assailable.

LADY MACBETH

(Frightened.) What's to be done?

MACBETH

(Pleased with himself, protectively.)
Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed.
(He turns his eyes up.)

Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale!

(LADY MACBETH gasps and puts her hand to her throat. MACBETH looks at her and smiles with satisfaction.)

So, prithee, go with me.

MACBETH goes out left. LADY MACBETH follows, slowly, her eyes fixed anxiously on his receding back.

The stage is blotted dark

SCENE II

The same as Scene 1. In the center of the stage is a rectangular banquet table set with plates and goblets for seven. Platters of food stand along the middle of it, and there are large branched candlesticks near the ends.

As the lights come up, a SERVANT is lighting the candles in the candlesticks. When this is done, he brings on seven stools and places them about the table, three in the back, two in the front, and one at either end. He goes out again and returns, carrying a large pitcher of wine, and fills the goblets. He then stands back against the wall, near the right end of the table, the pitcher in his hand.

MACBETH comes in right and stands upstage from the door. LADY MACBETH comes in, crosses in front of the table, and sits at the left end. Then ROSS, ANGUS, LENNOX, and two others (MENTEITH and CAITHNESS) appear at the door.

MACBETH

(Heartily.) You know your own degrees; sit down.

(The LORDS cross to the table and sit, leaving the place at the right end empty. LENNOX is to the left of the empty place. ROSS at LADY MACBETH'S right, the others as they choose.)

At first

And last the hearty welcome.

LORDS

Thanks to your majesty.

MACBETH

(*Still right.*) Ourself will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time
We will require her welcome.

LADY MACBETH

Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends,
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

The LORDS turn to her, raising their goblets. The FIRST MURDERER, his face smeared with blood, appears in the doorway, right.

MACBETH

(*To LADY MACBETH.*) See, they encounter thee with their
hearts' thanks. (*To the LORDS.*)
Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round.

(*MACBETH starts to move towards the table, but the SERVANT, who has noticed the MURDERER, speaks to MACBETH, and he turns back and crosses to the door. The LORDS help LADY MACBETH and themselves to food and then start eating. MACBETH draws the MURDERER downstage, right, and speaks to him.*)

(*In a low voice.*) There's blood upon thy face.

MURDERER

(*Also in a low voice.*) 'Tis Banquo's then.

MACBETH

(*With satisfaction.*) 'Tis better thee without than he within.
(*Eagerly.*) Is he dispatch'd?

MURDERER

(*Grimly.*) My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

MACBETH

Thou art the best o' the cut-throats; (*Questioningly.*) yet
he's good
That did the like for Fleance.

MURDERER

(*Quietly.*) Most royal sir,
Fleance is scap'd.

MACBETH

(*Turns towards the audience, speaking to himself.*)
Then comes my fit again. I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock;
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. (*Turns again to MURDERER.*)
But Banquo's safe?

MURDERER

Ay, my good lord; safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head,
The least a death to nature.

MACBETH

(Nods.)

Thanks for that.

(He turns again to the audience, grimly exultant.)

There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present.

(To MURDERER without turning.) Get thee gone; to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again.

The MURDERER bows and goes out right. LADY MACBETH looks up and calls to MACBETH.

LADY MACBETH

My royal lord,

You do not give the cheer; the feast is sold
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome.

MACBETH turns toward the table. He gestures to the SERVANT to hand him the goblet that stands by the empty place.

MACBETH

Sweet remembrancer!

(The SERVANT brings him the goblet and retires to his place. MACBETH raises the goblet.)

Now good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!

MACBETH drinks. The LORDS also raise their goblets and drink. The ghost of BANQUO, wrapped in a sheet, his face slashed and with blood in his hair, comes in upper left, seemingly through the wall, crosses back of the table, and sits on the empty stool.

LENNOX

May't please your highness sit.

MACBETH

(*Sententiously.*) Here had we now our country's honour
roof'd,
Were the grac'd person of our Banquo present.

ROSS

His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness
To grace us with your royal company.

MACBETH

(*Looking around the table, surprised.*) The table's full.

LENNOX

Here is a place reserv'd, sir.

MACBETH

Where?

LENNOX

(*Indicating the place at the right end of the table.*)
Here, my good lord.

(*The ghost of BANQUO slowly turns his head to face MACBETH. MACBETH starts back, his face frozen with horror. His hand falls to his side, and the wine in the goblet is sloshed onto the floor.*)

What is't that moves your highness?

MACBETH

(*His voice low and charged with fright and anger.*)
Which of you have done this?

LORDS

(With varying degrees of surprise, bewilderment, and consternation.) What, my good lord?

MACBETH *keeps his eyes riveted on the ghost, who slowly shakes his head.*

MACBETH

(Hoarsely.) Thou canst not say I did it; never shake Thy gory locks at me.

ROSS

(Rising, anxious but self-contained.)
Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.

LENNOX *and the other LORD at the back of the table rise.*
LADY MACBETH, *who has been watching MACBETH closely and with great uneasiness, now summons control of herself and gestures to the LORDS to sit down again.*

LADY MACBETH

(In a strained voice.) Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth.

(The LORDS hesitate. LADY MACBETH speaks a little sharply.)

Pray you, keep seat;

(The LORDS sit, their eyes on MACBETH.)
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well. *(Urgently.)* If much you note him.
You shall offend him and extend his passion;
Feed, and regard him not.

(The LORDS reluctantly turn their attention to eating, but those who can do so without turning steal occasional

covert glances at MACBETH. They are all silent and constrained.

LADY MACBETH rises, crosses in front of the table, takes MACBETH gently but firmly by the arm, and leads him down-stage right. He goes unresistingly.)

Are you a man?

MACBETH

Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.

MACBETH looks back over his shoulder at the ghost and keeps his eyes fixed on it, his face working. LADY MACBETH holds his arm firmly and speaks in a low voice.

LADY MACBETH

O proper stuff!

This is the very painting of your fear;
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan.
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

The ghost nods. With a hoarse cry MACBETH swings around, breaking out of LADY MACBETH's grasp and pointing at the ghost.

MACBETH

(Hoarsely, his voice rising.)

Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?

(The ghost nods again. MACBETH moves a hesitant step forward, his eyes on the ghost.)

Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.

LADY MACBETH

What, quite unmann'd in folly?

The ghost rises and vanishes again up left. Slowly MACBETH relaxes. He moves down right again and looks back.

MACBETH

(Calmer, but in a husky voice.) If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH

(Relieved.) Fie, for shame!

MACBETH crosses in front of LADY MACBETH and stands down right facing the audience. LADY MACBETH watches him a moment, then crosses back to her place at the table and sits down. She toys with her food, her eyes on MACBETH.

MACBETH

(In a low voice.)

Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time;
Ay, and since too, murthers have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear. The time has been
That when the brains were out the man would die,
And there an end; *(His voice rises.)* but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murthers on their crowns,
And push us from our stools.

LADY MACBETH

(Calling.) My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

The LORDS all look towards MACBETH. He gets hold of himself and turns towards them.

MACBETH

I do forget.

(He speaks with forced suavity.)

Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then I'll sit down.

(He raises the goblet, which he still holds in his hand, then notices it is empty. To the SERVANT.)

Give me some wine;

(The SERVANT comes down to him and pours wine into the goblet.)

fill full.

(The SERVANT goes back to his place. The ghost of BANQUO reappears up left and crosses slowly back of the table. MACBETH raises his goblet.)

I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
Would he were here! to all and him we thirst,
And all to all.

The LORDS rise and raise their goblets.

LORDS

Our duties, and the pledge.

BANQUO's ghost has now rounded the table and is coming downstage towards MACBETH. Suddenly MACBETH catches sight of him and backs away with a shout of terror, dropping his goblet with a clatter on the floor. The LORDS stare at him, and LADY MACBETH rises in agitation.

MACBETH

(Shouting.) Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with.

LADY MACBETH

(Desperately.) Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom; 'tis no other,
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

MACBETH

(Backs away step by step, the ghost following him.) What
man dare, I dare.
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble:

(He stops, and the ghost stops too. His voice rises.)
or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl.

(With a great effort of courage he points up left.)
Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence!

(For a moment the ghost looks at him, then slowly turns, moves back of the table and out up left. MACBETH watches him go, then relaxes.)

(Husily.) Why, so; being gone,
I am a man again. *(To LORDS.)* Pray you, sit still.

One by one the LORDS sit down again. MACBETH comes back of the table to the empty place and stands.

LADY MACBETH

(*Bitterly, to MACBETH.*) You have displac'd the mirth, broke
the good meeting,
With most admir'd disorder.

MACBETH

(*With quiet reasonableness, but still a little husky.*)
Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder?
(*He looks around at the faces of the LORDS, wonder-
ingly.*)

You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanch'd with fear.

ROSS

What sights, my lord?

LADY MACBETH

(*Rising, with imperious agitation.*)
I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him.
(*The LORDS rise.*) At once, good night;
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.

LENNOX

(*To LADY MACBETH.*) Good night; and better health
Attend his majesty!

The LORDS all bow to LADY MACBETH, and then, with a little hesitation, to MACBETH, who pays them no attention.

LADY MACBETH

(Her tone urging them to hurry.) A kind good night to all!

The LORDS go out right. LADY MACBETH signals to the SERVANT to go also. He crosses in front of the table, picking up the dropped goblet, and goes out left. MACBETH still stands in a daze behind the table. LADY MACBETH goes to him and touches his arm.

MACBETH

(Musingly, aware of LADY MACBETH.)

It will have blood, they say; blood will have blood.
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak—

(He looks at LADY MACBETH, like one coming out of a trance, then suddenly becomes natural. He looks around.)

What is the night?

LADY MACBETH

(Gently.) Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

MACBETH looks up and down the table, then asks suspiciously:

MACBETH

How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding?

LADY MACBETH

(Quietly.) Did you send to him, sir?

MACBETH

I hear it by the way, *(Roughly.)* but I will send;

(*With crafty malice.*) There's not a one of them but in his house

I keep a servant fee'd. (*He pauses.*) I will to-morrow,
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters;

More shall they speak, (*His voice rises.*) for now I am bent
to know,

By the worst means, the worst. (*Brutally.*) For mine own
good

All causes shall give way; (*His voice falls again.*) I am in
blood

Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.

LADY MACBETH

(*Gently.*) You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

MACBETH *looks at her a moment. Then with a wan smile gives her a light kiss.*

MACBETH

(*Gently.*) Come, we'll to sleep.

(*His voice hardens.*) We are yet but young in deed.

MACBETH *crosses and goes out right.* LADY MACBETH *puts her hand to her head in utter weariness of spirit, then follows him.*

The SERVANT comes in, left, and extinguishes the candles.

The stage is blotted dark

SCENE III

The stage remains dark. A long low roll of thunder is heard, then the cackling laugh of the WITCHES. Another roll

of thunder. Then the voices of the WITCHES come out of the darkness.

I WITCH

Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

2 WITCH

Thrice and once the hedge-pig whin'd.

3 WITCH

Harpier cries,—'tis time, 'tis time.

The lights come up, revealing the WITCHES' cavern. The light falls on the three WITCHES, right center, moving slowly around an enormous pot, out of which steam is rising. The rest of the stage is in semidarkness. The WITCHES are making a magic brew, and each WITCH, as she mentions an item of the ingredients, throws it in the pot.

I WITCH

Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

The three WITCHES join hands and circle the pot three times, chanting together.

ALL

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

2 WITCH

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL

(Circling three times with joined hands.)

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

3 WITCH

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab;
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our cauldron.

ALL

(Circling three times with hands joined.)

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

2 WITCH

Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

(The WITCHES stand still.)

By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.

Open, locks,
Whoever knocks!

The WITCHES move to the right side of the cauldron and stand.

MACBETH comes in, lower left, and stands in the semidarkness.

MACBETH

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't you do?

ALL

A deed without a name.

MACBETH

I conjure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:
Though you untie the winds and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed corn be lodg'd and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; answer me
To what I ask you.

I WITCH

Speak.

2 WITCH

Demand.

3 WITCH

We'll answer.

I WITCH

Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters.

MACBETH

Call 'em; let me see 'em.

I WITCH

(Sutting the action to the word.)

Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten
From the murtherer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

ALL

Come, high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

*There is a short roll of thunder. A child, clothed in black
and carrying a sword, comes from lower right and stands by
the cauldron.*

MACBETH

(Hoarsely.) Tell me, thou unknown power,—

I WITCH

He knows thy thought;
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.

I APPARITION

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me; enough.

The child goes out again, lower right, as MACBETH speaks.

MACBETH

Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution thanks;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright: (*Calling.*) but one word
more,—

I WITCH

He will not be commanded; here's another,
More potent than the first.

Another short roll of thunder. From lower right comes a second child, clothed in bloody rags, and stands by the cauldron.

2 APPARITION

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!
Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth.

The second APPARITION goes out, lower right.

MACBETH

Then live, Macduff; what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate; thou shalt not live,

That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

(Again a short roll of thunder. A third child appears lower right, clothed in white, with a crown on its head and a small tree in its hand, and comes to the cauldron.)

What is this,
That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby brow the round
And top of sovereignty?

ALL

(Sternly.) Listen, but speak not to't.

3 APPARITION

Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are;
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.

The APPARITION goes out, lower right.

MACBETH

That will never be.
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!
Rebellion's head, rise never, till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-plac'd Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature. *(Eagerly.)* Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me,—if your art
Can tell so much,—shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

ALL

Seek to know no more.

MACBETH

(*Angrily.*) I will be satisfied; deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you!

1 WITCH

Show!

2 WITCH

Show!

3 WITCH

Show!

ALL

Show his eyes and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart!

A drum starts beating with a low, even beat. From upper right, in the semidarkness, eight crowned KINGS, the last with a mirror in his hand, walk slowly across the back of the stage and out, upper left. MACBETH speaks as they pass.

MACBETH

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!
Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs.—And thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.—
A third is like the former.—(*His voice rises.*) Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this?—A fourth!—Start, eyes!—
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?—
(*Shouting angrily.*) Another yet!—A seventh!—I'll see no
more.—
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass

Which shows me many more.

Horrible sight!

(BANQUO's ghost follows the others, pointing towards them and nodding.) Now I see 'tis true;

For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his.

(MACBETH stands with his hands clenched. The drum-beat ceases. The WITCHES slip out, down right. MACBETH looks up and around, seeing nothing.)

Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!

(Calls off left, harshly.) Come in, without there!

LENNOX comes in, down left, frightened and obsequious.

LENNOX

What's your grace's will?

MACBETH

(Harshly.) Saw you the weird sisters?

LENNOX

(Trembling.)

No, my lord.

MACBETH

Came they not by you?

LENNOX

No, indeed, my lord.

MACBETH

(Viciously.) Infected be the air whereon they ride,
And damn'd all those that trust them. (More quietly.) I
did hear
The galloping of horse; who was't came by?

LENNOX

(*Stammering.*) 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you
word
Macduff is fled to England.

MACBETH

(*Angrily.*) Fled to England!

LENNOX

Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH *strides angrily to right center and turns towards the audience.*

MACBETH

(*Harshly.*) Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits;
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it. From this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. (*Pause.*) And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done;
The castle of Macduff I will surprise,
Seize upon Fife, give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line.

(*He turns to LENNOX.*) Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are.

LENNOX *goes out, lower left, and MACBETH strides after him. The stage is blotted dark. Out of the darkness comes the laughter of the WITCHES and a low roll of thunder.*

The curtain falls

ACT III

SCENE I

A hallway in a building somewhere in England. MALCOLM and MACDUFF are standing right front. ROSS enters, left front, and crosses to them.

MACDUFF

See, who comes here?

MALCOLM

My countryman; but yet I know him not.

MACDUFF

(*To ROSS.*) My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

ROSS *bows to MALCOLM and MACDUFF.*

MALCOLM

I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!

ROSS

Sir, amen.

MACDUFF

Stands Scotland where it did?

ROSS

Alas, poor country!

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave.

MACDUFF

(Eager for news.) How does my wife?ROSS *looks at MACDUFF and hesitates, embarrassed.*

ROSS

(Prevaricating.) Why, well.

MACDUFF

(Suspicious.) And all my children?

ROSS

(More glibly.) Well too.

MACDUFF

(Insistent.) The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?

ROSS

(Not looking at MACDUFF.) No; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

MACDUFF

Be not a niggard of your speech; how goes't?

ROSS *remains silent a moment.*

ROSS

(Smoothly.) When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out;
Now is the time of help; *(To MALCOLM.)* your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

MALCOLM

(A little complacently.) Be't their comfort

We are coming thither. Gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.

ROSS

Would I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.

MACDUFF

(*Anxiously.*) What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief
Due to some single breast?

ROSS

(*Evasively.*) No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe, (*Looking at MACDUFF.*) though
the main part
Pertains to you alone.

MACDUFF

If it be mine,
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.

ROSS

Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.

MACDUFF

Hum! I guess at it.

ROSS

Your castle is surpris'd, your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd.

MALCOLM

(*Murmurs.*) Merciful heaven!

*For a long moment MACDUFF is silent, staring blankly
at ROSS.*

MACDUFF

My children too?

ROSS

Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

MACDUFF

(*Bitterly.*) And I must be from thence!
(*Still uncomprehending.*) My wife kill'd too?

ROSS

(*Nods.*) I have said.

MALCOLM

(*A trifle condescendingly.*) Be comforted;
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

MACDUFF *laughs harshly and nods bitterly towards MAL-*
COLM.

MACDUFF

He has no children. (*He pauses and goes on, knowing the
truth but not yet quite believing it.*) All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? (*ROSS nods.*) O hell-kite!—All?

(*With crying pathos.*) What, all my pretty chickens and
their dam
At one fell swoop?

MALCOLM

Dispute it like a man.

MACDUFF

(*With a steady look at MALCOLM, harshly.*) I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man.
(*Gently.*) I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me.—(*To ROSS.*) Did heaven
look on,
And would not take their part? (*Forgetting both men.*)
Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee!
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

MALCOLM

Be this the whetstone of your sword. Let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

MACDUFF

(*Ignoring MALCOLM.*) O, I could play the woman with
mine eyes
And braggart with my tongue! (*Grimly.*) But, gentle
heavens,
Cut short all intermission; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; (*Softly.*) if he scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

MALCOLM

This tune goes manly.

Come, go we to the king; our power is ready.

Macbeth is ripe for shaking.

The stage is blotted dark

SCENE II

A room in the castle at Dunsinane. There is an entrance, right. The light is dim.

The DOCTOR and the GENTLEWOMAN stand left center.

DOCTOR

I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

GENTLEWOMAN

Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

DOCTOR

(*Pedantically.*) A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching! In this slumbry agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what at any time have you heard her say?

GENTLEWOMAN

That, sir, which I will not report after her.

DOCTOR

You may to me, and 'tis most meet you should.

GENTLEWOMAN

Neither to you nor any one, having no witness to confirm my speech.

(LADY MACBETH, *carrying a lighted taper in a candlestick, comes in, right. The DOCTOR and GENTLEWOMAN move to lower left.*)

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleep! Observe her; stand close.

DOCTOR

How came she by that light?

GENTLEWOMAN

Why, it stood by her; she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

LADY MACBETH *moves slowly across stage towards the others.*

DOCTOR

You see, her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN

Ay, but their sense is shut.

LADY MACBETH *sets the candlestick on the floor, then turns back, rubbing her hands together, as though washing them.*

DOCTOR

What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

GENTLEWOMAN

It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands; I have known her to continue in this a quarter of an hour.

LADY MACBETH

(Holding her hand up in front of her, yet not in her line of vision; wearily.) Yet here's a spot.

DOCTOR

(Taking pad and pencil from his belt, pedantically.) Hark! she speaks; I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

LADY MACBETH

(Annoyed.) Out, damned spot! out, I say! *(She holds her head up, listening, and counts, beating the counts with up-raised forefinger.)* One, two; why, then 'tis time to do't. *(She takes a step forward and stops, groping in front of her; commenting quietly.)* Hell is murky! *(Pause; scornfully.)* Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? *(Proudly.)* What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? *(Suddenly shuddering, in a low voice.)* Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

DOCTOR

(Quietly excited.) Do you mark that?

LADY MACBETH

(Quietly mournful.) The thane of Fife had a wife; where is she now? *(Turns to right and starts scrubbing her hands;*

wearily.) What, will these hands ne'er be clean? (*Turns back quickly and looks towards DOCTOR; sharply.*) No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that; you mar all with this starting.

DOCTOR

Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

GENTLEWOMAN

She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that; heaven knows what she has known.

LADY MACBETH

(Lifts her fingers to her nose as though smelling them; shudders.) Here's the smell of the blood still. *(Plaintively.)* All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. *(Sighs.)* Oh, oh, oh!

DOCTOR

What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

GENTLEWOMAN

I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

DOCTOR

(Tapping pad with pencil, musingly.) Well, well, well—

GENTLEWOMAN

Pray God it be, sir.

DOCTOR

This disease is beyond my practice; yet I have known those

which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

LADY MACBETH *moves left and picks up the candlestick.*

LADY MACBETH

(*Businesslike.*) Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale. I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

DOCTOR

(*Making a new discovery.*) Even so?

LADY MACBETH

(*Businesslike again.*) To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate. (*Insistently.*) Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. (*Wearily.*) What's done cannot be undone. (*Her voice trailing off to silence.*) To bed, to bed, to bed.

LADY MACBETH *moves slowly off right.*

The DOCTOR and GENTLEWOMAN move to center.

DOCTOR

Will she go now to bed?

GENTLEWOMAN

Directly.

DOCTOR

Foul whisperings are abroad. Unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles; infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.
More needs she the divine than the physician.
(*Devoutly.*) God, God, forgive us all! (*Professionally.*) Look
after her;

Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night.
I think, but dare not speak.

GENTLEWOMAN

Good night, good doctor.
The stage is blotted dark

SCENE III

The same as Scene 2. MACBETH stands center, the DOCTOR down left, two soldiers at either side of the door, right.

MACBETH

(*Fiercely.*) Bring me no more reports; let them fly all.
(*Boasting.*) Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. (*Scornfully.*) What's the boy Mal-
colm?
Was he not born of woman? (*Arrogantly.*) The spirits that
know
All mortal consequences have pronounc'd me thus:
"Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee." (*Wildly.*) Then fly, false
thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures;
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

(*A SERVANT comes in, right, and goes to MACBETH. MAC-
BETH starts violently and shouts at him.*)
The devil damn thee black, thou cream-fac'd loon!
Where got'st thou that goose look?

SERVANT

(Trembling.) There is ten thousand—

MACBETH

(Bullying.)

Geese, villain?

SERVANT

(Stammering.)

Soldiers, sir.

MACBETH

(Brutally.) Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

SERVANT

The English force, so please you.

MACBETH

(Turning his back on him.) Take thy face hence.*(The SERVANT scoots out, right.)*

(Shouts.) Seyton! *(Wearily, to himself.)* I am sick at heart,
When I behold— *(Shouts louder and more angrily.)* Seyton,
I say!

(Musing, sorry for himself.) I have liv'd long enough: my
way of life

Is fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf,
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.

(*With hoarse rage.*) Seyton!

SEYTON *comes in, right, and bows.*

SEYTON

(*Obsequiously.*) What's your gracious pleasure?

MACBETH

(*Harshly.*)

What news more?

SEYTON

All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.

MACBETH

I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.

(*To the SOLDIERS, commandingly.*) Give me my armour.

One of the SOLDIERS goes out, right.

SEYTON

'Tis not needed yet.

MACBETH

I'll put it on.

Send out moe horses, skirr the country round;

(*Brutally.*) Hang those that talk of fear.

(*The SOLDIER returns with MACBETH's armour.*)

(*To the SOLDIER, harshly.*)

Give me mine armour.

(*The SOLDIER comes forward and waits. MACBETH ignores him and turns to the DOCTOR.*)

How does your patient, doctor?

DOCTOR

Not so sick, my lord,

As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies

That keep her from her rest.

MACBETH

(*A casual command.*) Cure her of that.

(*Musingly, thinking of himself.*)

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

DOCTOR

Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

MACBETH

(*Turning away abruptly.*)

Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.

(*To the SOLDIER.*)

Come, put mine armour on; give me my staff.

(*The SOLDIER begins to help him into his armour.*)

(*To SEYTON.*) Seyton, send out. (*To the DOCTOR.*) Doctor, the
thanes fly from me.

(*To the SOLDIER, sharply.*) Come, sir, dispatch.

(*To the DOCTOR, playing with a new idea, forgetting the
SOLDIER and the armour which he now has half on.*)

If thou couldst, doctor, cast
The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again.

(*The SOLDIER offers MACBETH his helmet, and at MACBETH'S*

command puts it on, but awry. Brutally.) Pull't off, I say!

(Musing again, to the DOCTOR.)

What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,

Would scour these English hence? *(More sharply.)* Hear'st thou of them?

DOCTOR

(Quietly.) Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

The SOLDIER again offers MACBETH his helmet.

MACBETH

(Brushing him aside.) Bring it after me.

(Braggart.) I will not be afraid of death and bane
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.

MACBETH storms out, right. SEYTON and the SOLDIERS follow. The DOCTOR looks after them, shaking his head.

DOCTOR

Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here.

The stage is blotted dark

SCENE IV

A field near Birnam Wood. For a few moments the stage remains dark. The sound of men marching comes out of the darkness. The lights come up. MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, and others, in armour, march in down right.

MENTEITH

The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff.
Revenge burn in them. (*To CAITHNESS.*) What does the
tyrant?

CAITHNESS

Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies.
Some say he's mad; others, that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury; but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause
Within the belt of rule.

ANGUS

Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love; now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

MENTEITH

Who then shall blame
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?

MALCOLM, SIWARD, MACDUFF, ROSS, *and the English* SOLDIERS *all armed, march in up right and come down center.*
The two groups greet each other.

MALCOLM

Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.

MENTEITH

We doubt it nothing.

SIWARD

What wood is this before us?

MENTEITH

The wood of Birnam.

MALCOLM

Let every soldier hew him down a bough,
And bear't before him; thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host, and make discovery
Err in report of us.

SOLDIERS

It shall be done.

*They go out left, marching.**The stage is blotted dark*

SCENE V

The courtyard of the castle at Dunsinane. Entrance to castle, right; gate of courtyard, left. The stage remains dark for a few moments, and the sound of men marching is heard. When the lights come up, MACBETH, in armour, is storming around down left, SEYTON is right center, and two SOLDIERS stand by the castle door, right.

· MACBETH

(*Boasting.*) Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still "They come!" Our castle's strength

Will laugh a siege to scorn; here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up.
Were they not forc'd with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.

(The cry of women is heard off stage.)

(Vaguely curious.)

What is that noise?

SEYTON

It is the cry of women, my good lord.

SEYTON bows and goes out, right.

MACBETH

(Musing.) I have almost forgot the taste of fears;
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek. I have supp'd full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

(SEYTON comes back.) Wherefore was that cry?

SEYTON

(In a low voice.) The queen, my lord, is dead.

MACBETH

(Indifferently.) She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
(Musing.) To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage

And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

(*A SERVANT, fearful and hesitant, comes in, left.*)
(*Harshly.*) Thou com'st to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

SERVANT

(*Stammering.*) Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

MACBETH

(*Impatiently.*) Well, say, sir.

SERVANT

(*Almost crying with fear.*)
As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

MACBETH

(*Shouts, angry and terrified.*) Liar and slave!

SERVANT

(*Trembling.*) Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so.
Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.

MACBETH

(*Bullying.*) If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling thee. (*Suddenly weary.*) If thy speech be
sooth,

I care not if thou dost for me as much. (*To himself.*) I pull
in resolution, and begin

To doubt the equivocation of the fiend

That lies like truth: (*His voice rises.*) "Fear not, till Birnam
wood

Do come to Dunsinane"; (*Wildly.*) and now a wood

Comes toward Dunsinane. (*Shouts.*) Arm, arm, and out!

(*SEYTON and the SOLDIERS go out, left, followed by the
SERVANT.*)

(*Sighs wearily.*) I gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish the estate o' the world were now undone.

(*Crosses the stage, shouting.*)

Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!

At least we'll die with harness on our back.

(*The bell begins to toll. MACBETH strides out, left. The
bell continues to toll. Sounds of battle, as in the Prologue,
may be heard. Gradually the hullabaloo subsides to dead still-
ness.*)

MACBETH comes in, left, his sword drawn. Aware of
physical danger and steadied by it, he speaks with sanity and
fortitude.)

They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the course. What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

MACDUFF, with drawn sword, comes in left and stands
at the gate, watching MACBETH for a moment.

MACDUFF

Turn, hell-hound, turn!

MACBETH *wheels, sees who it is, and lets his sword drop to his side.*

MACBETH

(*Quietly.*) Of all men else I have avoided thee.
But get thee back; my soul is too much charg'd
With blood of thine already.

MACDUFF

I have no words;
My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out!
The two men fight, circling, and then stop.

MACBETH

Thou locest labour.
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed.
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

MACDUFF

(*Contemptuous.*) Despair thy charm,
And let the angel whom thou still hast serv'd
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripp'd.

MACBETH *steps back.*

MACBETH

Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!

(*Recovering.*) And be these juggling fiends no more believ'd,

That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.
I'll not fight with thee.

MACDUFF

(*Mocking, contemptuous, and triumphant.*)

Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time;
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
"Here may you see the tyrant."

MACBETH

I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou oppos'd, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last. (*In a low, firm voice.*) Before my body
I throw my warlike shield. (*Fearlessly, almost jubilantly.*)

Lay on, Macduff,
And damn'd be him that first cries "Hold, enough!"

They fight. Shouts are again heard off stage, hailing MALCOLM king. MACDUFF drives his sword through MACBETH, and MACBETH falls. MACDUFF, his sword in hand, stands looking down at MACBETH. The stage becomes quiet. Then the WITCHES are heard laughing off stage. A low roll of thunder tapers off to silence.

The curtain falls

GLOSSARY

The preparation of a glossary for *Macbeth* presents several difficulties. There are many unfamiliar words or words used in unfamiliar senses. There is more than the usual amount of involved and flowery language. There are some sentences that are ungrammatical, some whose meaning is a matter of dispute among the best authorities. And frequently these difficulties occur in passages that are essential to the continuity of the play.

It has seemed necessary to preface the Glossary proper with a few notes on the meaning or probable meaning of some of the involved or disputed passages that have, perforce, been kept in this version. For the most part unfamiliar words and difficult passages in the witch scenes have been left unexplained, on the theory that their effectiveness is in no way lessened by unintelligibility.

Prologue:

"Present grace and great prediction"—*Honor already achieved and a prophecy of greatness to come.*

"As thick as tale"—A disputed phrase; possibly it means *as thick as could be counted.*

"Trusted home"—*Trusted to its logical conclusion.*

Act I, Scene 1:

"Milk of human kindness"—Another disputed phrase; possibly it means *human weakness.*

"To beguile the time, look like the time"—*To deceive, look as you would be expected to look under the circumstances.*

"The love that follows us," etc.—*The love that is given us by others*

sometimes causes us inconvenience, but we are grateful for it nevertheless.

"Your servants ever have theirs," etc.—*We, your servants, consider ourselves and all we have as a trust, an account of which we are duty-bound to render to you (the owner) whenever you desire.*

Act I, Scene 2:

"If it were done when 'tis done," etc.—*If the deed were really finished when it has been done, it would be well to do it at once; if the assassination could catch us in a net all the consequences of the act and win success with its completion, etc.*

"Nor time nor place did then adhere"—*Neither time nor place were then in accord with what you wanted to do.*

Act I, Scene 3:

"Being unprepar'd," etc.—*"Because we were unprepared, our will, which otherwise would have been free to act, was in bondage to our lack of supplies."*

"If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis"—*If you will go along with me when the time comes.*

Act II, Scene 1:

"Something from the palace"—*Some distance from the palace.*

Act II, Scene 2:

"Better thee without," etc.—*Probably Better outside you than inside him.*

"The feast is sold," etc.—*The feast seems to be something sold, not something given, if the host does not make his guests feel welcome while it is being held.*

"If trembling I inhabit then," etc.—*The exact meaning is uncertain, but the general sense is If I tremble then, protest that I am a young girl's child, not a woman's.*

"Strange even to the disposition that I owe"—*A stranger to my own disposition.*

"Stand not upon the order of your going"—*Do not wait to leave in order according to your rank.*

Act III, Scene 2:

"For the dignity of the whole body"—*For the rank of queen, which she holds.*

Act III, Scene 5:

"She should have died hereafter"—*If she had not died now, she would have died eventually.*

Addition (Prologue): *title*

All-thing (II, 1): *entirely*

Blood-boltered (II, 3): *blood-clotted*

Breech'd (I, 3): *trouser'd*

Briefly (I, 3): *quickly*

Cast (water) (III, 3): *analyze*

Clep'd (II, 1): *named*

Cling (III, 5): *dry up, desiccate*

Close (III, 2): *hidden*

Coign of vantage (I, 1): *convenient corner*

Compt (I, 1): *pronounced "count"*

Convince (I, 2): *overcome*

Countenance (I, 3): *be in keeping with*

Dam (III, 1): *mother*

Doff (III, 1): *take off (as of clothes)*

Dudgeon (I, 3): *hilt, haft*

Durst (I, 2): *dared*

Ecstasy (II, 1): *mental unrest or illness*

Enow (I, 3): *enough*

Enrages (II, 2): *makes insane*

Entrance (I, 1): *three syllables: enterance*

Eterne (II, 1): *eternal*

Expedition (I, 3): *speed*

Faculties (I, 2): *official prerogatives*

Fantastical (Prologue): *imaginary*

Fee-grief (III, 1): *privately owned grief*

Forced (III, 5): *reinforced*

Get (Prologue): *beget*

Gin (III, 5): *begin*

Glamis: *in the Scottish pronunciation this rhymes with "alms"*

God be with you (II, 1): *pronounced "Good-by"*

Gouts (I, 3): *drops*

Graymalkin (Prologue): *pronounced "Grimawkin"*

Harness (III, 5): *armor*

Hell-kite (III, 1): *a kite is a bird of prey*

Holp (I, 1): *helped*

Husbandry (I, 3): *economy, thrift*

Impress (II, 3): *conscript*

Informs (I, 3): *makes forms, creates false images*

Intrenchant (III, 5): *uncuttable*

Latch (III, 1): *catch*

Lees (I, 3): *dregs*

- Limbeck (I, 2): *alembic, the cap of a still*
 Lodg'd (II, 3): *beaten down*
 Martlet (I, 1): *a kind of swallow*
 Metaphysical (I, 1): *supernatural*
 Moe (III, 3): *more*
 Mortality (I, 3): *mortal life*
 Napkin (I, 3): *handkerchief*
 Offend (II, 2): *injure, harm*
 On: *several lines where modern English uses "of"*
 Ope (I, 3): *open*
 Our: *in some places pronounced as two syllables*
 Overcome (II, 2): *overshadow*
 Over-red (III, 3): *redde[n] over (with blood)*
 Owe (Prologue; II, 2): *own, possess*
 Passion (II, 2): *mental illness*
 Possets (I, 3): *nightcaps, drinks taken at bedtime*
 Purveyor (I, 1): *an officer sent forward to provide food for the king and his retinue*
 Quell (I, 2): *kill, slaughter*
 Readiness (I, 3): *clothing*
 Receipt (I, 2): *receptacle*
 Roof'd (II, 2): *under one roof*
 Scape (II, 2; III, 1): *escape*
 Scotch'd (II, 1): *injured, wounded*
 Seeling (II, 1): *blindfolding*
 Sensible (I, 3): *susceptible*
 Shoughs (II, 1): *pronounced "shocks"*
 Sirrah: *Sir; used in addressing servants*
 Skirr (III, 3): *scour*
 Sleeve (I, 3): *rough silk*
 Sooth (III, 5): *true*
 Speculation (II, 2): *intelligence, look of comprehension*
 Sprites (I, 3): *spirits, ghosts*
 Thane: *a nobleman inferior in rank to an earl*
 Valu'd file (II, 1): *catalogue of values or qualities*
 While then (II, 1): *till then*
 Wrought (Prologue): *occupied, agitated*
 Yesty (II, 3): *foamy*

TRAITS OF THE CHARACTERS

THE THREE WITCHES

These are malicious old hags, conceived in accordance with seventeenth-century notions of witchcraft. According to the belief of the time, witches had familiar spirits in the shape of animals, could themselves become animals (though without tails), could travel the sea in sieves and the air on broomsticks, had a particular love of pestering pigs, delighted in frightening timid folk and creating disturbances generally, and could use black magic to bring sickness and even death to those they had a grouch against. In addition, the number three, the phrase "weird sisters," and several other points concerning these particular witches indicate that Shakespeare intended them to symbolize, if not actually to be, the three Fates that govern human destiny.

MACBETH

A complex character, who is destroyed by the conflict within him of contradictory elements. On the one hand he is a man of action, able, clear-headed, and courageous when he sees his course before him. But he is also abnormally imaginative and easily frightened by his fantasies when there is no action to engage his attention. He is highly ambitious, and yet inclined to hesitate for fear of others' opinions. He has a glib tongue that serves him well in an emergency, and a knack for hoodwinking other people. At the beginning of the play he is in his early thirties, attractive and universally liked. But as the play progresses, his attractiveness is burned away by an increasing brutality and a growing susceptibility to fits of uncontrollable terror.

BANQUO

A mature, highly intelligent gentleman in his early thirties,

loyal, brave, honorable, with a sense of humor and not easily deceived. He has a "royalty of nature" to which others instinctively render respect and deference, and which passes unconscious judgment on all dishonorable thoughts and acts.

ROSS

A middle-aged gentleman, versed in all the arts of court life and upper-class civility, suave but wholly sincere, a little obtuse, too highly civilized to be spontaneous, but in an impersonal fashion friendly.

ANGUS

Of the same general pattern as Ross, but much younger, and still a little awkward in his gentility. He has not yet quite learned how to manage either his body or his language, and there is a stiltedness about him that would be comic were it not for his manifestly good background and breeding.

LADY MACBETH

A little woman of tremendous energy, about thirty, sensitive, high-strung, and of iron will. She can fix her mind on an objective and move forward unflinchingly to its attainment. But she is very much a woman. Her ambition is for her husband, not for herself. Though she flays him with her tongue when he wavers, she can be gentle; and when there is no need for Macbeth to act, she soothes his fears, understandingly and unjudgingly, as though he were a child.

SERVANT

A young man born to his job and trained to be neat in appearance, quick in carrying out orders, and to keep his place.

DUNCAN

An old man, white-bearded, patriarchal, benign, trusting

everyone because his fatherly affection goes out to everyone, courtly, courteous, but in all his actions as simple as a child.

FLEANCE

Banquo's son is a boy of fourteen or fifteen, unspoiled, unsophisticated, too genuine to be anything but boyish, and showing promise of becoming as fine a gentleman as his father.

MACDUFF

A middle-aged man of powerful emotions, who loves passionately and can hate passionately, and who acts for the most part under the impulse of his emotions rather than by reason. He has a rough sort of chivalry that accords respect to all women indiscriminately, and loyalty to those men whom he conceives to be his friends; but he lacks the clear insight of Banquo and judges men and women superficially and by generalities.

LENNOX

A high-born youngster in his latter teens, eager to be a participant in affairs of importance, easily hoodwinked, but not so much because he is unintelligent as because he is too eager to get ahead in the world to look closely at men and circumstances that may help his advancement.

MALCOLM

A youth in his early twenties, unworldly rather from lack of knowledge of the world than from simplicity of nature, not without courage and yet ignorant of how to use it in an emergency, inclined to play the part of prince without being quite princelike, and to speak condescendingly, though in all sincerity, to those older and wiser than himself.

DONALBAIN

Slightly younger than his brother, more cautious, less princelike, more self-interested, with an instinctive cynical wisdom that Malcolm lacks.

PORTER

An old retainer, with a great love of play-acting that comes out in him when he is drunk. He has been in the service of Macbeth and his family for so many years that he has come to assume privileges that he would roundly denounce in any young footman or groom. But there is an inherent servility in him that robs him of true dignity or restraining self-respect. We never see him fully sober, but he is more of a person when drunk.

THE MURDERERS

Men of peasant stock, naturally self-reliant and self-respecting, but driven by persistent ill fortune to desperation. The First Murderer is more the man of the two, reckless as to what becomes of him, but still able to take it on the chin, and with a touch of leadership. The other, by nature less self-reliant, is soured and surly and inclined to blame anyone but himself for his misfortunes.

THE APPARITIONS

These may best be played by rather small children. It is probably better, in that case, if their lines are read off stage; and it might add to the eeriness of the scene if the lines were read by a man, in an oracular monotone. Any suggestion of the ridiculous must be carefully avoided, however.

DOCTOR

A quiet, studious, religious man of middle life, gentle to the point of timidity, inquisitive, acquainted with the evil in the

world from having read about it, but baffled and distressed when actually confronted with it.

GENTLEWOMAN

A plain woman, who sees things as they are, is unperturbed by what she sees, and knows how to keep her own counsel about it.

SEYTON

A colorless yes-man, living by his ability to flatter and cater to the whims of another, and despising in an indolent sort of way the man he serves.

MENTEITH; CAITHNESS; SIWARD

Experienced soldiers, fearless, simple-minded, taking life as it comes and too familiar with death to think about it.

There are a number of supernumerary parts; and the speaking cast is so large that it may be desirable to double the supernumerary parts with some of the minor speaking parts. Indeed, even some of the speaking parts may be doubled up if desired.

Those who appear in one act only are: Duncan (Act I, Scene 1); Fleance (Act I, Scenes 1 and 3); Donalbain (Act I, Scenes 1 and 3); Porter (Act I, Scene 3); First Murderer (Act II, Scenes 1 and 2); Second Murderer (Act II, Scene 1); Doctor (Act III, Scenes 2 and 3); Seyton (Act III, Scenes 3 and 5); Menteith, Caithness, Siward (Act III, Scene 4). Banquo has no part in Act III.

SCENERY

Macbeth opens on a barren heath in northern Scotland, a place of mist and distance. In a very real sense that barren heath is the background of the whole play. It is entirely appropriate, therefore, that the audience should have constantly before its eyes the grayness and somberness of the heath. Also it is desirable, especially in amateur performances, to have as simple a stage setting as possible, and one which requires a minimum amount of changing. The setting here proposed is based on these two considerations.

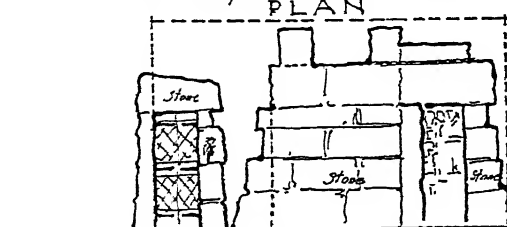
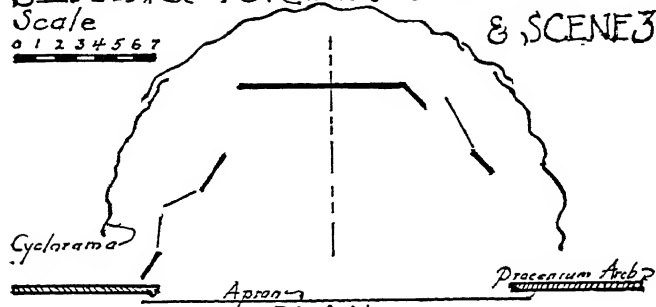
The basic setting is a cyclorama of simple gray hangings. Best of all perhaps would be cheesecloth, dyed smoke gray and hung loosely in front of cloth of a heavier material and a slightly darker value. But any medium gray hangings will do. These hangings are so hung as to allow for masked entrances up right, down right, up left, and down left. This basic setting is used alone for the heath near Forres (Prologue), and also for the scene near Birnam Wood (Act III, Scene 4).

For the other settings, set pieces, painted on the flat, are placed in varying combinations against the cyclorama. These set-pieces are four in number: a rectangular piece representing a segment of stone wall, with hinged irregularities that may be folded back; and three doorways with practicable doors and suggestions of stone wall around the frames. One of these is a massive double door that serves as the gate to the courtyard of the castles at Inverness and at Dunsinane. The other two are somewhat higher doorways that serve sometimes as inside doors, sometimes as outside doors, in the castles at Inverness, Forres, and Dunsinane. These doorways have hinged irregularities at the top which are folded back in the interior scenes.

SETTING FOR ACT 1 SCENES 1 & 2 & SCENE 3

Scale

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

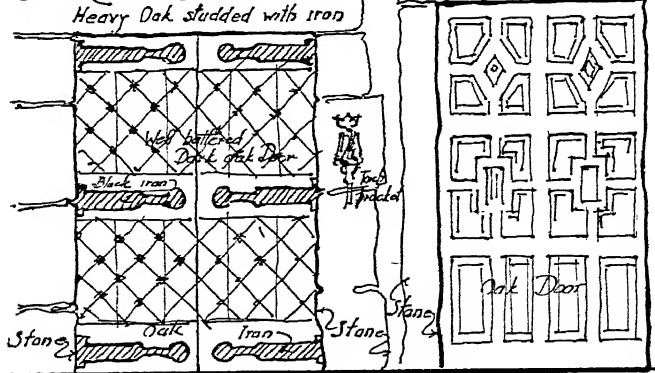


Scale

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 for Doors

COURTYARD DOOR

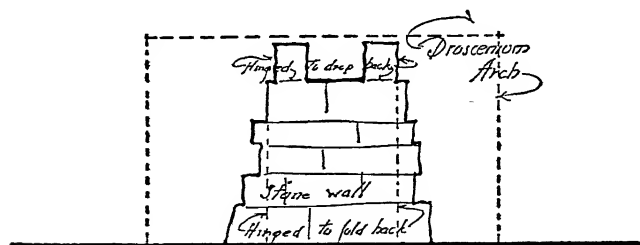
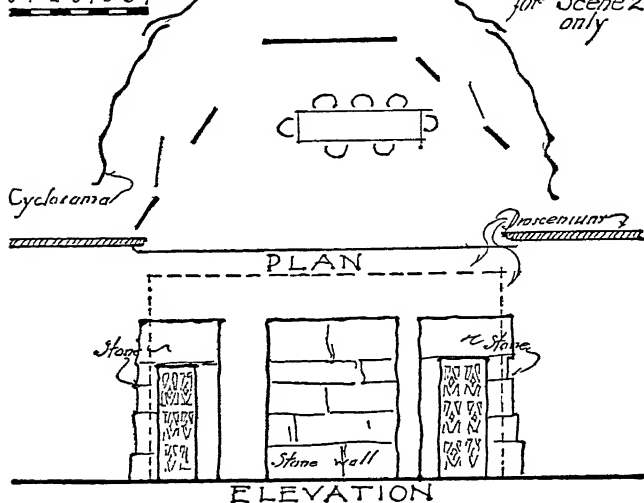
CASTLE DOOR



SETTING FOR ACT 2 SCENES 1 & 2

Scale in feet

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Notes - Table
for Scene 2
only

ACT 2 SCENE 3

Scenery may be made of heavy cotton glued tacked & stretched on light wood frame or cut from sheets of compo board. Paint stone very gray green & wood a rich dark red-brown.

SETTING FOR ACT 3 SC'S 1-2-3-4-5

Scale in feet
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Cyclorama

PLAN

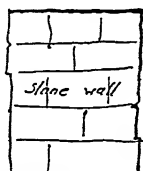
SCENE 4
& PROLOGUE

Proscenium

Apron

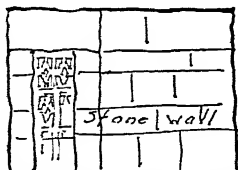
Proscenium

INCLUSIVE PLAN

Use back
wall on-
ly, with
side & top
flaps fold-
ed backSCENE
ONE

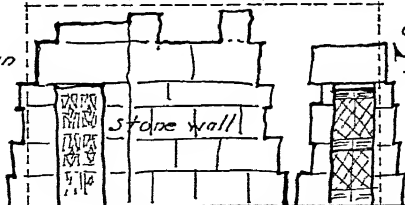
Stage floor

ELEVATION

Use
back
wall and
interior
door with
all flaps
backSCENES
2 & 3

Stage floor

ELEVATIONS - ABOVE & BELOW

Use all
flats as in
general
plan a-
bove -SCENE
FIVE

Stage floor

These units of scenery are used in the following combinations:

Prologue: Cyclorama only.

Act I, Scenes 1, 2, and 3: Cyclorama; wall piece with irregularities showing on the right side and on top; one of the castle doors with irregularities showing, joined to the left edge of the wall piece; courtyard door, independent, down right.

Act II, Scenes 1 and 2: Cyclorama; wall piece with all irregularities folded back; both castle doors, one right and one left, with irregularities folded back, and both independent of the wall piece.

Act II, Scene 3: Cyclorama; wall piece with all irregularities showing.

Act III, Scene 1: Cyclorama; wall piece with all irregularities folded back.

Act III, Scenes 2 and 3: Cyclorama; wall piece with all irregularities folded back; one castle door with irregularities folded back, joined to right edge of wall piece.

Act III, Scene 4: Cyclorama only.

Act III, Scene 5: Cyclorama; wall piece with irregularities showing on the left side and on top; one castle door with irregularities showing, joined to right edge of wall piece; courtyard door, independent, down left.

PAINTING

THE SETTING colors in hue and quality should, of course, go (by harmony or by contrast) with the costume colors, and these tend toward the strong and sharp. If the primary colors, yellow, blue, and red, are at hand to start with (see General

Notes), alter them toward secondary colors, and you have a palette of orange-yellow, blue-green, and red-violet. Paint the walls orange-yellow (light middle value); the shadows, joints, and so forth (also vines, if used) green; the wood-work (doors and the like) red-violet, dark and dingy and full of rusty-black nails. The result will give a satisfactory background for the primary colors and crude materials of the costumes.

LIGHTING

SOME OF the play takes place at night, and the Prologue should be played in a dull light. This means that at least three lighting arrangements are necessary: full lighting for daylight scenes and the banquet scene in Act II; dull light, as of a foggy afternoon, for the Prologue; and a very dim light for the night scenes. This dim light should be just bright enough to make the actors visible, but not so bright but what a torch or taper will give a noticeable increase in illumination.

The scene in the witches' cavern (Act II, Scene 3) requires special consideration. It would probably be most effective to have the lighting for the night scenes, supplemented by a spotlight focused on the caldron and its immediate surroundings, in the light of which the witches make their brew and the supernatural apparitions become visible.

Real torches and tapers would, of course, be most effective. But the fire hazard makes this under most circumstances an impossibility. Electric imitations operated by dry cells must be used instead.

Act I, Scene 3, as directed, calls for a change of lighting to be carried on in the course of the action. This demands the

use of dimmers, which may not always be available. If dimmers cannot be had, it will be necessary to break the scene into two parts, just before the entrance of the Porter, in order that the two halves of the scene may be appropriately lighted.

The best way to achieve the lighting suggested in the following scene-by-scene notes will depend on the facilities of the stage where the performance is to be given and will have to be worked out accordingly. Once it has been worked out, the electrician should make note of each of the arrangements in such way that he can produce any one of them without hesitation; for many of the scenes must be lighted in the full sight of the audience.

Prologue: Dull, diffused light

Act I, Scene 1: Lights full up

Act I, Scene 2: Lights full up

Act I, Scene 3: Very dim light; in mid-scene the lights are gradually brought up full

Act II, Scene 1: Lights full up

Act II, Scene 2: Lights full up; lighted candles on stage

Act II, Scene 3: Very dim light; spotlight focused on caldron, right center

Act III, Scene 1: Lights full up

Act III, Scene 2: Very dim light

Act III, Scene 3: Lights full up

Act III, Scene 4: Lights full up

Act III, Scene 5: Lights full up

COSTUMES

THE CLOTHES worn in the eleventh century were for the most part simple, and those worn in northern Scotland were probably simpler even than the average. The following notes are based on that assumption.

Men wore a tunic, knee-length or a little longer, belted at the waist and with sleeves. Over this they wore a blanket-like cloak, pinned on the shoulder with a heavy, simple brooch. They wore stockings to the knees, gartered at the top, and sometimes with tapelike gartering wound the whole length of the calf. Shoes were slipperlike and without heels. Headgear, if worn, was simple and close-fitting, with an occasional casque-like hat.

Women wore a long-skirted chemise with long sleeves. Over this they wore a shorter girdled tunic, sometimes with elbow-length sleeves, or a full-length, one-piece girdled gown, or both. The skirt of the overdress was frequently pleated and very full. Bare arms were unknown and considered highly immodest. A mantle or veil was frequently worn on the head and over the shoulders. Women's shoes were like the men's.

Undergarments were sometimes of linen. Outer garments were most commonly of coarse-woven wool, not unlike burlap. The wool was dyed red, blue, green, or yellow, and woven in solid color or in plaid designs. Leather garments also were frequently worn. Fur was worn as a lining and as a trim.

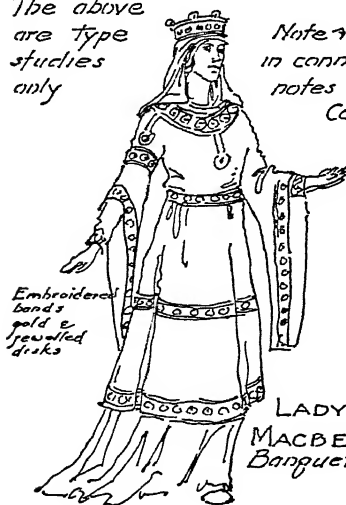
The armor of the period was a coat of mail, sometimes knee-length, sometimes shorter, with elbow-length or wrist-length sleeves. Helmets were simple peaked caps of steel. Legs were often covered with steel greaves. Common soldiers frequently had no metal armor, but wore leather instead.



The above
are type
studies
only

Notes Use only
in connection with
notes on
Costumes

Gold
crowns
studded
with
jewels



Embroidered
bands
gold &
jewelled
disks

LADY
MACBETH in
Banquet scene



DUNCAN

LADY MACBETH

The
THREE WITCHES

MACBETH

COSTUMES
and DETAILS OF
COSTUME

BANQUO & FLEANCE



SOLDIER

Servants were, of course, garbed even more simply than their masters. The men would probably wear coarse woolen tunics, with no cloak; and the overdress of the women would be of the simplest cut and of coarse material.

The nightgowns may be long linen or woolen shifts, not unlike our grandparents' nightgowns, but without the shirt-tail. They were not, as a matter of fact, worn in bed, but were used as we use dressing-gowns.

Men wore their hair short or bobbed, and were either clean-shaven or bearded. Women wore their hair long, in two braids over the shoulders, and often braided ribbons in with the hair. Jewelry was heavy, simple, and for the most part practical—brooches, buckles, finger rings. Kings and queens wore simple coronets. Pouches hung from the belt may actually not have been used till a slightly later period, but they would be a convenient and decorative addition to the costume in this play.

The specific costume suggestions here given may be taken, rather as hints for the costuming of the play than as specifications to be exactly followed. Genuine Scottish plaids are always appropriate. The Stewart plaid is suggested for Banquo because he was traditionally supposed to be an ancestor of the royal house of Stewart. It can be approximated by a green, blue, and yellow lattice encircling eight-inch or ten-inch red squares.

(Paintings and costume designs for the period have been adapted for the drawings.)

WITCHES: Long, voluminous, smoke-gray cloaks and gray conical caps. Long unbraided hair and gray scraggly beards.

MACBETH: Red tunic and stockings; leather belt and garters; blue cloak.

Second costume: White tunic and stockings; fancy purple gartering; purple belt; purple cape; coronet.

Third costume: armor—bronze washers on leather, or similar imitation.

BANQUO: Blue tunic and stockings; red belt; royal Stewart plaid cloak. Leather shield, secured around the neck, suggested for Prologue.

ROSS: Dark green tunic and stockings; leather belt; Graham plaid cloak. (Graham plaid: greens and blues, squares and lattice, predominate.)

ANGUS: Lincoln green tunic; red stockings; leather belt; Lincoln green cloak.

LADY MACBETH: White chemise; pale blue overdress, pleated or not; silver embroidery and decoration, and silver girdle.

Second costume: White chemise; full-skirted red and gold overdress; gold girdle; red mantle; coronet.

Light blue girded tunic for sleep-walking scene.

SERVANT: Dark green tunic and stockings.

DUNCAN: Blue tunic with gold-embroidered borders, and blue stockings; dark blue belt and gartering; white cape with fur trim; coronet. A long gray beard would help.

FLEANCE: Blue tunic embroidered in red; Stewart plaid cloak; blue stockings and cap.

MACDUFF: Dark red tunic and stockings; leather belt; dark blue cloak. Leather as a base for simulated armor in the duel scene.

LENNOX: White tunic; yellow stockings and cloak; leather belt and gartering.

MALCOLM: Yellow tunic and stockings; leather belt and garters; red cloak.

DONALBAIN: Yellow tunic and stockings; leather belt and garters; dark green cloak.

PORTER, MURDERERS: Gray tunic and stockings.

DOCTOR: Gray tunic and stockings; dark green cloak.

GENTLEWOMAN: Light gray chemise; pale blue overdress and veil; dark blue girdle.

SEYTON: Leather tunic and stockings.

MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, SIWARD: Coats of mail; steel greaves and helmets.

FIRST APPARITION: Black tunic; sword.

SECOND APPARITION: Several torn and crumpled tunics, one over the other, and smeared here and there with red to simulate blood-stains.

THIRD APPARITION: White belted tunic; coronet; a small ever-green tree in his hand.

EIGHT KINGS (APPARITIONS): White tunics; royal Stewart cloaks; coronets.

PROPERTIES

Oblong banquet table, set with plates and metal goblets for seven; platters of food; two branched candlesticks (II, 2)

Seven stools (II, 2)

A large pot, with artificial (electric) fire under it (II, 3)

"Pilot's thumb"—First Witch (Prologue)

Cloak representing robe of office of thaneship of Cawdor—Ross (Prologue)

Letter—Lady Macbeth (I, 1)

Sword and dagger—Banquo (I, 3)

Diamond in pouch—Banquo (I, 3)

Lighted torch—Macbeth (I, 3)

Two bloody daggers—Macbeth (I, 3)

Red handkerchief—Porter (I, 3)

Coin in pouch—Macduff (I, 3)

Wine pitcher—Servant (II, 2)

Contents of witches' brew: 20 items—Witches (II, 3)

Sword—First Apparition (II, 3)
Small pine tree—Third Apparition (II, 3)
Taper in candlestick—Lady Macbeth (III, 2)
Pad of paper and pencil—Doctor (III, 2)
Macbeth's armor—Soldier (III, 3)
Swords—Macbeth and Macduff (III, 5)
Swords for Soldiers and others as desired

OFF-STAGE NOISES

Long sheet of zinc, shaken to represent thunder (Prologue;
II, 3; III, 5)
Snare drum, beaten off stage (Prologue; II, 3; III, as de-
sired)
Large bell, rung off stage (I, 3; III, 5)
Sounds of battle off stage (Prologue; III, 5)
Witches' laugh off stage (Prologue; II, 3; III, 5)
Macbeth speaks off stage (I, 3)
Knocking off stage (I, 3)
Women's cry off stage (III, 5)
Sounds of men marching off stage (Act III, between Scenes
3 and 4, and between Scenes 4 and 5)

GENERAL NOTES

ORGANIZATION

In the amateur theater there is frequently disagreement as to who is who and why, in any given production. And the resulting squabbles that show up impede the work, engender bitterness, and sometimes lead to the breaking up of a promising organization. The disputes are almost always traceable to a lack of precise definition of authority; and it may be helpful, in the interest of a complex art, to offer here some definitions based on considerable experience.

DIRECTOR

In the professional theater the man with the money is top dog. He is called the producer. He can hire and fire as he pleases, though sometimes he has to pay for the privilege. It is not his custom, however, to interfere with his production. He calls in a director, puts the production in his charge, and, except for paying the bills, washes his hands of the business. The director is the recognized authority and becomes responsible for the show.

The amateur director is, also, boss of the production, but his authority legitimately proceeds only from his knowledge and ability, and is seldom of an arbitrary kind. He creates an organization which may be best represented by a triangle standing on its apex. He is not top but bottom man, supporting and encouraging those above him. He perceives talent, engages it, and helps it to evolve. His authority lies in his ability to choose others who can help carry out the agreed-on conception of the play in hand. He holds the general conception together and guides its growth, but he realizes that the detailed elaboration of any given part of the

work in the production may be beyond his own detailed knowledge of it. He requires only that the resulting parts harmonize with each other and with the whole. He sets the frame of the picture and keeps it in place, and so long as his collaborators work within it, he lets them alone. His own active part in the detail work of production lies in training the actors and in rehearsing them in the play.

DESIGNER

The designer should have authority over the entire stage picture, as given by scenery, costumes, properties, and lighting. But here again, as with the director, his authority is used to guide toward the general effect and not to exact arbitrary control over details. He designs settings and costumes, makes working designs for the building of scenery, and writes the program of requirements for costumes, lighting, and properties. He is often not one but several persons, but among these there is usually a chief.

SCENE BUILDER

Scenery construction is a specialized craft, and the stage carpenter follows a well-established technique in building the sets. He is the link between the designer and the scene painter. His casual imitator may proceed, however, without fear of the tyranny of tradition.

SCENE PAINTER

The designer is sometimes competent to paint his own scenery; and, if so, he may legitimately advise on the mixing and application of paint. But the scene painter, though not necessarily a designer, is a person in his own right, and should be able to take the designer's drawing or model, enlarge it, and reproduce it on the raw sets furnished by the stage carpenter.

LIGHTING MAN

The lighting man is given a problem to solve: to light this setting or that for this or that time of day or night and under such and such conditions. His solution of the problem is subject to the approval first of the designer and finally of the director. But his method of solving it is his own business.

COSTUMER

The costumer may also be a designer capable of taking a working program (of style, color, and value) and realizing this in terms of his own art—costumes. More often the costumer is a kind of superior dressmaker only, who makes the costumes from the designer's drawings and under his supervision.

PROPERTY MAN

"Props" is responsible for finding or making whatever articles are used by and not tied to the actors, for all accessories to the settings, and for a continuing argument with the scenic force as to what, being scenery, should be furnished by it, and what, not being scenery, should be furnished by himself. With a good director, who can always be called on to settle them, the disputes seldom advance to the acrimonious stage, but are just good-natured give-and-take.

STAGE MANAGER

Theoretically the stage manager takes the production in hand after it is a completed product and keeps it going from performance to performance. Practically, especially in the amateur theater, he helps with everything and is on the job all the time.

STAGE HANDS

Stage hands perform the mechanical part of fetching and carrying the scenery, setting it up, fitting it together, and striking and removing it, as required by the different scenes. They work under direct supervision of the stage manager, but their job, though skilled, is rehearsed by rote.

PROMPTER

The prompter should know the play almost by heart, and be able without the slightest hesitation to furnish the lost cue or words to any faltering actor, and to do this as quietly as possible.

DIRECTION

Direction is a distinct and most important branch in the art of the theater; it interprets the play, sets the key in which it is to be rendered, and envisages an appropriate *mise en scène*. It gives pace and rhythm to the action, building the scenes and pointing up the climaxes. It gives their postures, business, and movements to the actors, and teaches them how to read their lines. It has been said that a play is as good or as bad as the direction makes it.

The good director therefore needs a sense of rhythm, an eye for pictorial composition, an understanding of human emotions and of the way those emotions are expressed in gesture, facial expression, and tone of voice; and more important than any of these, he should have the ability to make the most of all the talent collaborating with him.

SCENERY

Scenery is properly used as an aid to the imagination, whether of actor or of audience. There can be too much as

well as too little of it. The right amount helps the actor to play his part, and the audience to believe and take a reciprocal part in the play. It varies with the fashion of the time. Shakespeare's audiences were not used to scenery visibly put before them. They visualized it for themselves. His actors could render a passion without a velvet background. We of today, actors and audience alike, are more lazy-minded, because accustomed to the help that scenery gives.

There are several kinds of scenery—realistic, suggestive, symbolic—each with its merits and limitations. The kind that suggests is most practical for the average unprofessional group. There is not too much of it to do, it is real as far as it goes, and it goes far enough to give the imagination a sufficient start to take the rest for granted. But any producing group is free of course to tackle any kind of scenery it can conceive and execute.

Scenery is not the primary nor even an essential thing in the giving of a Shakespearean play. Clear the stage of all distractions, give it color, warmth, and a soft but sufficient light, and both actors and audience will be able to lend themselves, enjoyably and believably, to the poetic quality of the play.

SCENE PAINTING

Make your start at scene painting with three colors, yellow, blue, and red, in addition to black and white. The yellow should be neither red nor green; the blue, neither red nor green; the red, neither blue nor yellow. All should be as near the same value as possible. This is a very rough and inaccurate rule of thumb, but adequate. Every manufacturer has a bewildering number of colors to select from, and you have to do as well as you can by your eye. As a test for the

right yellow, blue, and red, mix small equal amounts of the three colors together, and if the result is a pretty fair gray, you are reasonably safe. The trick is to get harmony in your settings, and if you use a little of each of these colors in all the colors you mix, harmony will be approximated. Black and white help you to make your color dark or light.

You can buy commercial colors by the pound and mix them either dry or wet. Add the amount of water you need to get a fluid mixture; and add glue to make it stick to the canvas. Buy sheet glue, crack it up, add water, melt the glue, and keep it warm enough to pour. Very little glue is needed.

You can apply the paint with brush or sponge. The canvas, stretched, of course, can be painted on the easel, wall, or floor. The main thing is to have a good time and note your progress toward good results. It is simpler to paint the set the way you want it to look than to depend on the electrician to make it look the way it ought to: i. e., don't depend on the colored lights to alter your own colors for the better. Tell the electrician to light the set as you have painted it and not to try to paint it for you. He can, of course, intensify your color by throwing light of the same color upon it. But since he hasn't enough lights to do this for all the colors you may have used and illuminate the stage while doing it, he had better use only the colors he would use for a simple daylight effect.

The setting should of course be only a frame for the actors, and the colors should be subdued below the costume colors. That is, the setting colors should be relatively neutral or gray. This is best effected by always using the three primary colors, yellow, blue, and red, in any paint mixture, allowing any desired major color to dominate. Thus a yellow wall would have both red and blue in it, but the audience would not know it. In lightening the value of any mixture with

white, it is to be remembered that white (the commercial whiting) has some blue in it and that this amount, for any given result, may be all the blue required.

Preliminary experiments with color are necessary always, and it will help if a model of the setting is made, colored, and lighted before the setting itself is painted.

LIGHTING

The lighting of a stage setting in a modern theater is the final touch of art in giving quality to any production. But the equipment to do this is elaborate and expensive and is, for the most part, lacking in the average school and community auditorium. In these little more can be expected than power enough to illuminate the stage and perhaps a few strip and bunch lights to focus and distribute it. Even footlights, that sign-manual of the magic world of the theater, are often lacking. But the paucity of means may very well be a challenge leading to achievement. In the early days of the Harvard 47 Workshop, the lighting crew had little more than nothing to work with, and they did a very good job with it.

The essential things to try for are an adequate illumination of actors as they range within the limits of the setting, and an avoidance of exaggerated moving shadows or other disconcerting results of misplaced light sources. It is a matter of experiment. Place the shielded bulbs in such relationship to each other and to the stage that the light from all, taken together, tends to a balance of effect and helps to eliminate shadows. Use straw and amber bulbs mostly, thus avoiding a sharp illumination.

It is imperative that a registered electrician should be in charge of lighting, or on hand.

COSTUMES

First of all, the clothes should look like the character who wears them. Next, while being in character, they should be conspicuous in proportion as the character is important. There are two principal means of making them conspicuous: *value* and *color*. Value runs from black through gray to white, and the two ends of it, i. e., black and white, are of course the most conspicuous values and are about equally so. When black and white are used together the effect is heightened.

Color conspicuousness depends on hue and on intensity of hue. That is, the warm colors (as yellow and red) are more conspicuous than the cold colors (as green and blue). And both are more conspicuous the brighter they are. Of course, all costumes are related in value and color to the setting, either by harmony or by contrast.

Design takes note, in addition to value and color, of other elements, as: *mass, direction, detail*. A solid black or solid yellow counts larger and stronger than it does if sharing with another value or another color-mass.

Verticals add to height; horizontals reduce height and add to breadth.

Chains, sashes, buttons, pendants, and the like all add interest, if used with restraint, and contribute to character-detail.

Clothes, like people, are not always what they pretend to be, and this, on the stage, is legitimate deception. Velvet, satin, silk, gold braid, and the like are expensive stuffs, but their acceptable substitutes (as seen across the footlights) are not.

Flannelette can be made to look like velvet; sateen, rayon, and glazed chintz can be made to pass for satin and silk. Cotton can be used for wool, while unbleached cotton, bur-

lap, even burlap sacking can be used in their own right for rustic clothes. Machine-made lace, dyed yellow, can pass for gold braid. Cotton batting and wool batting (dyed and picked) make a good fur. Glass spotted with colored wax can substitute for jewels, imitation leather for the genuine article, and so on. Almost always cheap substitutes can be found to take the place, in superficial appearance, of the genuine things. But there is this very important point to remember. It is next to impossible to put the real and the imitation together without having them show each other up.

Costume designing is a purposeful business. Anything done to or with a costume must be knowingly and not casually or accidentally done.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS ON SCENERY AND COSTUMES

For those wishing to make more of the study of costumes, the following are suggested from the many books on the subject:

Barton, Lucy. *Historic Costume for the Stage*, Boston, W. H. Baker & Co., 1935.

Brooke, Iris. *Western European Costume*, London, G. G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., 1939.

Brooke, Iris, and Laver, James. *English Costume from the Fourteenth through the Nineteenth Century*, New York, Macmillan, 1937.

Chalmers, Helena. *Clothes On and Off the Stage*, New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1928.

Hope, Thomas. *Costume of the Ancients*, London, Henry G. Bohm, 1841.

Kelly, F. M. *Shakespearean Costume for Stage and Screen*, Boston, W. H. Baker & Co., 1938.

Norris, Herbert. *Costume and Fashion*, New York, E. P. Dutton & Co., 1933.

Those wishing to make more of a study of stagecraft will find plenty of books, among them:

Heffner, Hubert C., Selden, Samuel, and Sellman, Hunton D. *Modern Theatre Practice, a Handbook for Non-Professionals*, New York, F. S. Crofts & Co., 1935. (This book also has full directions for building scenery and for lighting.)

Helvenston, Harold. *Scenery, a Manual of Scene Design*, Stanford University, Stanford University Press, 1931. (This has more about painting, properties, minor details, and ought to be used to supplement *Modern Theatre Practice*.)

Selden, Samuel, and Sellman, Hunton D. *Stage Scenery and Lighting, a Handbook for Non-Professionals*, New York, F. S. Crofts & Co., 1930.

LANGUAGE

Shakespeare's plays were written over three centuries ago. In the years since, the English language has undergone various changes. Some words have come to have different meanings, some have dropped out of usage altogether. Phrases and contracted forms commonly used then are no longer used. In addition, flowery and involved speech was popular in Elizabethan England. All these facts make for occasional obscurity in the language of Shakespeare's plays.

Wherever possible, obscure passages have been omitted. Some of the archaic features of Shakespearean English, however, are of too common occurrence to be avoided; and the

rendering of these is a problem that must be dealt with in a modern production.

Shakespeare makes frequent use of contractions. Many of these are regularly used today. Others are no longer used: for example, *o'* for *of*, *i'* for *in*, *'t* for *it*, and *'s* for *his*. These are perfectly intelligible; but they might tend to distract and annoy an audience unnecessarily, and it may be better to use the full forms of these words. It may also be found desirable to modernize such contractions as *'tis* and *o'er*. But in all cases, the old form is preserved in the text, and any change is left to the discretion of the director.

It will be noticed that in the text the past tense in *-ed* frequently appears as *-'d*. This indicates that the ending is to be pronounced as it would be pronounced today. Wherever the full form in *-ed* occurs (except after vowels), it is to be pronounced as an independent syllable. It will be found necessary to use this pronunciation in verse passages, even where it sounds archaic, to preserve the meter.

But these points are of minor importance. The main thing, if the play is to be intelligible to an audience, is that each actor should know the precise meaning of the words he utters.

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